A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

SOVIET ECONOMY: NEW CONTROLS

NEW TIMES

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WHEN GENERALS ARE FOR PEACE

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PLOTTERS IN DEMAND

1917–1987

TIME AND PEOPLE

A red-starred ANT-25 plane landed at the aerodrome of Vancouver on June 20, 1937. Its crew—Valery Chkalov, Alexander Belyakov and Georgy Baidukov—had taken 63 hours 16 minutes to accomplish the first-ever nonstop flight from the Soviet Union to the United States via the North Pole.

"What kind of engine is the plane powered by?" one of the reporters who surrounded the plane wondered—and was much surprised to see the nameplate reading Made in U.S.S.R.

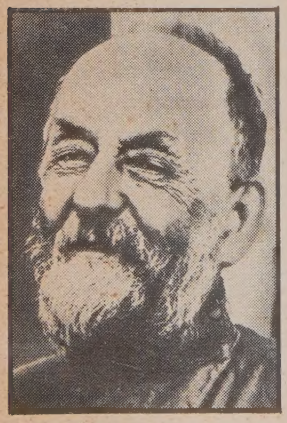
The Soviet land was growing stronger with every year, and spreading its wings. Increasingly frequently newspapers reported its pioneering achievements. The most daring plans became a reality. This was due to the enthusiasm of the trailblazers who were building the new society, to precise calculations by scientists, and efficient equipment and instruments created by Soviet designers, engineers and workers.

Record-breaking flights, the storming of the stratosphere, the exploration of the Arctic.... Scientists outstripped time as they worked on projects that bordered on science fiction. Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, a modest Kaluga schoolteacher, looked so far ahead that many of his ideas regarding cosmonautics have lost none of their relevance to this day. When already well advanced in years, Tsiolkovsky commented as follows on a book he had read: "Sensible, interesting, useful." The book was by the young engineer Sergei Korolyov, the future spacecraft designer.

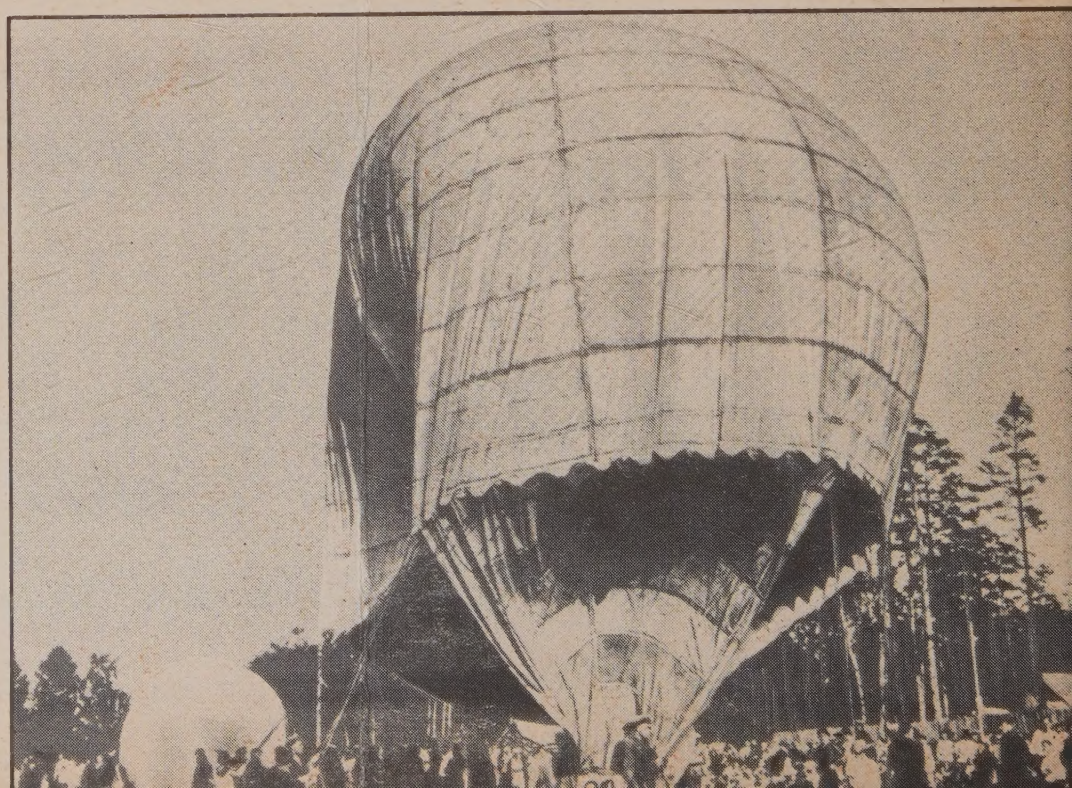
The first women-fliers, Heroes of the Soviet Union Polina Osipenko, Valentina Grizodubova, Marina Raskova. 1938.

Most collective farms changed over from draft animals to tractors in the thirties—a considerable achievement for those times.

Konstantin Tsiolkovsky.



The SSSR stratostat has just landed. 1935.



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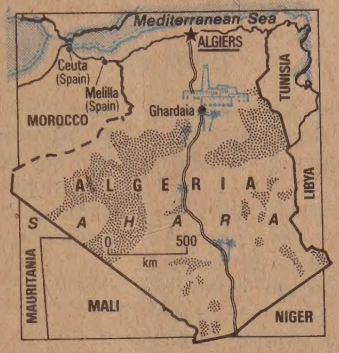

The development of the Sahara.

The 7th anti-NATO march in Spain.

New Times announces a quiz devoted to the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution.
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- four second prizes
- eight third prizes
- fifty consolation prizes
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Cover by **Eduard Drobitsky**

The June plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee and a session of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet have endorsed the programme for a radical restructuring of the country's economic management system. The nation and every workingman is faced with the task of implementing this programme at every level in the shortest terms.

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TAKING UP THE CHALLENGE OF THE TIMES

Excerpts from Mikhail Gorbachev's report to the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee

June 25, 1987

The time that has elapsed since the April plenary meeting has been one of the most demanding and politically crowded periods in the history of our Party and the life of the nation.

It is safe to say that over the last two years the political situation in the country has changed substantially. There is a growing realization of the fact that the need for restructuring has arisen from the increasing contradictions in our social development which, having gradually accumulated without being promptly dealt with, had virtually assumed pre-crisis dimensions.

●

The change our society has been undergoing since the January plenary meeting has made it especially clear that the healthy forces in the country, its working people have come out firmly in support of restructuring, acceleration, resolving outstanding problems without delay, and energetically overcoming stagnation and conservatism.

●

The revolutionary changes that have already taken place in our society have brought to the fore the contradiction between the demands for renewal, creativity and constructive initiative, on the one hand, and conservatism, inertia and selfish interest, on the other. This real contradiction has specifically manifested itself in the imbalance between the growing activity of the people as a whole and the bureaucratic approach that still persists in the most diverse fields, the attempts to frustrate the renewal drive. The overcoming of this contradiction calls for prompt and resolute measures in personnel policy, and in the assertion of new attitudes and norms in Party, state and public life.

In what does the Politburo see the most effective means of resolving this contradiction? The only sure answer to this question is to promote democracy in every way. It is administration of society by injunction that is holding back our development today, as is amply born out by past experience. And democratic forms alone can give a powerful stimulus to this development.

●

Since the April plenum of the Central Committee, the Party has succeeded in creating a new moral and political atmosphere in society, an atmosphere of creativity, exploration, realistic assessments and an uncompromising struggle against all that hinders progress. For this reason the prime conclusion to be drawn from the record of the past two years is that it is necessary not only to preserve and maintain, but also to promote in every way the atmosphere of openness that has set in in the country and enables every Soviet citizen to uphold his or her civic principles, actively participate in the discussion and solution of vital social problems, and accelerate progress in achieving this.

●

The substance and direction of a radical reform in management are clear in principle. They are expressed in the formula: the more socialism, the more democracy.

What does the strengthening of socialism mean in real terms? The very essence of our revolutionary teaching and the whole of our vast experience show that socialism should not be perceived as a static frozen society. Nor should the practical effort to improve it be regarded as a mere doctoring of complex reality to make it square with the ideas, concepts and formulas that have been definitively laid down.

Proceeding from the needs of Soviet society at its present stage of development we must renew our ideas of the economic forms of socialism with a view to giving scope for a radical restructuring of the economic mechanism.

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We must realize that the time when management was reduced to commands, prohibitions and slogans is gone. Now it is clear to all that such methods will no longer do. They are simply ineffective. It is an imperative of the time we live in that we should give all the working people powerful incentives to reveal their abilities in full, increase their efficiency, and make the most of our production resources.

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The restructuring drive underway across the land is a direct continuation of the cause of the October Revolution, and consistently projects the ideals inscribed on the banner of that Revolution, whose 70th anniversary we celebrate this year.

Restructuring is our answer to the historic challenge of the times. Our Party and our people are certain to prove equal to this challenge, as is evidenced by their past achievements: the carrying out of the world's greatest social revolution, the building of socialism, the epoch-making victory in the Great Patriotic War.

We have always risen to historic occasions, and we will do so now.

THE ECONOMY GOES DEMOCRATIC

Reflections after the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee

Yuri Shevchenko

New York Times: There is capitalism in the U.S.S.R., only don't call it that.

Boston Globe: In the eighties apprehensions about Soviet competitiveness have subsided.

Daily Telegraph: What do we find in Mikhail Gorbachev's speeches each time? Calls for honesty, sobriety, punctuality, conscientious work - in a word, less vodka, more stock - taking and control. I don't think most classics of the market economy would disagree with this.

Rzeczpospolita: The plenary meeting gave a comprehensive analysis to the basic elements of the management system.

Newsday: The U.S.S.R. may suddenly become a more important factor of the world economy than all the seven states which have had a summit meeting in Venice recently.

Rabotnichesko delo: The reconstruction now underway in the Soviet Union is directly continuing the work begun by the October Revolution.

As we see, opinions, assessments and forecasts differ.

What all the commentators have in common, however, is the realization of the importance of the CPSU Central Committee's June plenary meeting, which worked out and endorsed the basic principles underlying the restructuring of our national economic management system. The plenary meeting remains in the focus of public attention worldwide, and interest in its seems to be growing in a geometrical progression. People are interested in everything, from the reasons for the economic reform to how it works at the Soviet factories which have switched over to new ways.

From April to June

In the two-odd years since the April, 1985 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, the situation in our country has changed radically. The complex processes of transformation, reassessment, new thinking and new action, which have become common practice in the U.S.S.R., have come to be known as reconstruction.

This period is, perhaps, one of the most crowded ones in the country's history. It is chiefly characterized by quests for solutions to the problems Soviet society has come up against in connection with the once growing discrepancies in its development.

Such problems abound. To begin with, the practice of gross output figures taking precedence over the quality of products, economic efficiency, the thrifty use of resources and competitiveness has been common in our economy for years.

The reform has absorbed the record of our practical work over the past two years, products of scientific thought and the lessons of decades of building socialism

At a certain stage of development, when building up an industry and agriculture of our own was a matter of life and death (and we had to start from scratch in the country inherited by us from tsarism), such practice was justified, no matter how heavily it drew on the country's natural and labour resources. But you cannot run the economy in this way permanently.

The discrepancy between industrial plants', farms' and the working people's natural striving for more independence and more opportunities to display initiative, on the one hand, and the regimentation of the economy, rigidly centralized planning, and administration by injunction on the other, manifested itself to an ever greater extent. This style of management was aptly described at the plenary meeting as "administrative pressure."

This pressure has resulted in inefficient economic management and scarcity of goods; in the output of poor-quality and even unwanted products (owing to the emphasis on plan fulfilment in the gross); in enormous state subsidies to industrial plants, which fostered parasitic attitudes; in the non-repayment of credits on a mass scale; and in ignoring scientific and technological progress. All this placed a heavy burden on the state and on the people.

This model of economic management - a faulty one, as we see today - did not function in a vacuum. It perfectly suited many people who worked in the economy and managed it - and in the social sphere, for that matter. Administration by injunction generated and reinforced red tape which, in turn, gave rise to all sorts of cover-ups. Discrepancies between words and deeds, demagogy, corruption and abuses penetrated ever deeper into the pores of the state organism. They undermined it and distorted the very essence of socialism. Contradictions and complications accumulated, stratified, came to a head and effectively assumed pre-crisis forms.

The situation was further complicated by stubborn relapses into arbitrary forms of management inherited from the "personality cult" period, on the one hand, and totally unjustified complacency, on the other.

Such was the situation that resulted in the need for reconstruction.

In April, 1985 the healthy forces of the nation managed to initiate a fundamental change in the situation, in the people's mentality and self-assessment, their attitude to the fate of the country, their civic duty and to their day-to-day work.

It is my impression that restructuring, openness and democratization in all spheres of life amount to a veritable revolution. The process of renewal and purification, the process of solving the accumulated contradictions by a resolute effort became a chain reaction that spread to ever newer spheres - the economy and science, education and culture, and public life as such. The past two years have awakened the country.

The same two years have made it clear to us that restructuring is not a triumphant march but hard going, that it meets with resistance on the part of demagogues and conservatives, and comes up against self-interest, sloth and mediocrity, all of which thrived on the old state of affairs.

We came to understand that restructuring was synonymous with struggle.

We were convinced of that in the course of introducing the practice of state quality control of finished products, which was frankly a painful process; in the course of difficult experiments in self-financing at a number of factories where a fair system of payment in accordance with end results was introduced; in the course of the democratization of administrative bodies, secondary and higher school reorganization and other transformations that were revolutionary in their essence.

The process of transformation has brought to the fore the discrepancy between support for the policy of renewal, reconstruction, demands for creativity and constructive initiative, on the one hand, and conservatism and inertia, on the other. The imperative of the time - that the concept of radical reform especially in the economic sphere, be worked out - gained in urgency from day to day. There arose an inescapable dialectical need to re-orient economic growth from intermediate to socially meaningful end results, put an end to general shortages of goods and the manufacturer's primacy over the consumer, and set up an economic mechanism that would pay its way.

This is what the June plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee applied itself to do.

The concept of reform

The economic reform now under way in the U.S.S.R. is the focus of attention of scientists and businessmen, statisticians and housewives. Judging from numerous press comments and our readers' numerous letters to the editor, world public opinion has taken due account of the boldness and consistency of the reform that began with the main link of the economy, the industrial plant, and therefore assigns the leading role to the workingman, that is to the working class.

What does the radical restructuring of economic management consist in?

It consists in a resolute changeover from predominantly administrative to predominantly economic methods of management, and taking the interests of all the parties concerned into account, in a broad democratization of economic management. It also consists in shifting the emphasis from extensive to intensive methods, from quantity to quality.

The main problem in the theory and practice of socialism is how to surpass capitalism in stimulating economic, scientific, technological and social progress, how to harmonize economic planning with the interests of the individual and of the work collective. The answer to this problem lies in making the working man the real master of his workplace, and of society as a whole. This is the cornerstone of the reform.

From now on, work collectives and individual workers will be given greater control of public property than ever, and have the decisive say on how to use it. The reform ensures the participation of the working people in the practical management of the economy at all levels - from team to national. The reform makes pay dependent on the quality of work.

The 13th five-year-plan period will mark the decisive stage in the radical restructuring of the economic management system. It is by that time that we plan to complete the reform of the planning, pricing, financing and crediting mechanism

The reform entails a multitude of new developments, such as increasing the independence of factories and amalgamations, changing them over to full self-support and self-financing, making them fully responsible for the results of their activity; a radical restructuring of executive economic management bodies - ministries and departments, the U.S.S.R. State Planning Committee, and other central organizations in charge of the economy which, from now on will concentrate on determining the strategy, rates and proportions of the development of the national economy as a whole, on keeping it balanced; changes in the pricing, financial and crediting mechanism; the establishment of new organizational structures for the intensification of specialized and the strengthening of joint production; and involving science directly in production for the purpose of reaching the highest international standards.

The most important of all the components listed above is, I think, changing industrial plants over to self-support and making them pay their way. However, each component of the reform poses objectively complex tasks. The reason I single out self-support is that it will be the principle underlying the functioning of thousands, tens of thousands of plants, big and small - in fact, of the entire economic infrastructure, of the entire state. Consequently, it will be the very foundation and background of reconstruction.

Dialogue with a plenum participant

I interviewed Professor Vladimir Moskalenko, D. Sc. (Economics), Deputy General Director of the Mikhail Frunze Engineering Research and Production Amalgamation in Sumy. Professor Moskalenko is an initiator of the new economic management system based on self-support and self-financing, and a participant in the June plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. With his kindly sun-tanned wrinkled face, his heavy hands and broad shoulders, he looked more like a ploughman than a professor.

- Professor, the phrases like "the Sumy experiment" and "Sumy acceleration" have become current. They are now perceived as part and parcel of reconstruction. The experiment carried out at your Amalgamation and at the Avto VAZ motor works has become the basis of the economic reform and even put new economic terms into nationwide circulation. I mean the term "economic norm," for instance. Could you please explain what it means?

- This term has long been familir to engineers, technologists and economists, but today it is spilling over from strictly technical language into oridinary speech. By definition, it means a strict and invariable criterion. Payments into the state budget for production assets, land, water, labour resources, as well as interest on credits must conform to stable long-term economic norms. In the same way, the formation of wage funds and the fulfilment of the work collectives' cultural and social needs must also be governed by strict norms. The same goes for the prices charged for goods and services. The trouble was that our production plants did not always proceed from economic norms in their work. The norms in use were often without basis and not very strictly observed. But it is guaranteed norms that ensure the main thing - the harmony of the work collective's and the national interests.

- In what way?

- the Political Report of the CPSU

Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress says: "When the work collectives of enterprises know beforehand the specifics of the planned period - delivery targets, prices, deductions from profits to the budget, normals for making up payroll funds - they can creatively, without fearing to reveal their untapped potentialities, draw up plans providing for higher growth rates of output and much higher efficiency." Moskalenko snapped the book shut and smiled. "Without fearing to reveal their untapped potentialities" - that is the gist of it. This is what the harmony of interests means. Simple,isn't it? Perhaps it sounds rather technical? But this is the effort of a lifetime, and not mine alone, either. And this is exactly what we mean by the revolution in the national economy.

- The quotation you have just read contains the words "they can." Well, you have already proved able to demonstrate at an actual factory that self-financing and self-set economic norms do work. Could you explain **how** they work?

- In the beginning was the goal. We looked for a way of enabling our amalgamation not merely to meet its expenditures from its income, but to sustain its economic and social development exclusively from earnings, profits and depreciation charges. The means towards this end was to get the work collective interested in making full use of production potential. This was achieved through a system of stable economic norms. Let's see how the system works. We hand over to the state and to our Ministry a fixed proportion of our profit, and spend the rest on our own needs. If we run out of profits, we borrow money, and then pay our debts from our earnings. This arrangement compels the factory to keep reducing its material and labour outlays, bringing down production costs and increasing profit margins.

- It does look simple enough.

- Like anything that makes sense.

- But what's so new about it? Didn't we seek to reduce expenses, and production costs, increase profit margins, and so on, before?

- We did, but in what way? Until quite recently, the main trouble with our economic mechanism was that in planning we used the level achieved, the end results of the previous year, as the point of departure, while plan fulfilment was our criterion of efficiency and the basis on which we built up the system of incentives for individual workers and production plants. But surely every person, and every industrial plant, has a latent potential which by far surpasses actual performance in terms of, say, the fulfilment of a plan. How is the full potential to be tapped? Plans proceeding from the level achieved created a discrepancy in the economic mechanism between its goal (greater efficiency) and its practical functioning. What I mean is that under the circumstances a factory was interested in plan targets being reduced (because lower assignments were easier to fulfil and overfulfil), in concealing their reserves and in under-utilizing their potential. That was due to the fact that the practice of using plan fulfilment as the criterion for economic performance simply fails to conform to **objective** reality. The task was, therefore, to look for a method of authentic assessment of the plan itself and the results achieved, and of stimulating the work collective to do its level best.

We at our Amalgamation solved the problem by adding to the norms we had an entirely **new** one, which we called the potentiality norm. This is a complex of scientifically calculated standards set for such factory-related indicators as the technological progress of production, the economic effect yielded by organizational and technical innovations, the production plant utilization factor, output quality, and the range of social amenities made available to the work collective. The potentiality norm is now included in the criterion of the collective's and each worker's performance; it made remuneration conditional on the degree to which potential is used, and not on plan fulfilment.

To quote Lenin, "The historical moment has arrived when theory is being transformed into practice, vitalized by practice, corrected by practice, tested by practice." These words fully apply to the present day.

The economic reform has enabled us to harmonize the interests of our Amalgamation with those of the state, and as a result we have been showing steady profits for quite some time. Over the years of the experiment there has never arisen a need for plan correction (a nightmare of the past); all the yearly targets were attained ahead of schedule, output increased by 160 per cent owing to the use of internal resources, and all the quality indicators have improved. Here are some indicative statistics: staff turnover is down to four per cent today as against 12.2 per cent in 1970.

- Are you confident of your Amalgamation's future? Do you think the reform will do it good?

- I am confident, but not calmly so. As a matter of fact, I've lost all my sleep over the whole thing. No economic system - the new one, in particular - is static, but a living thing. It is supposed to respond promptly to any changes in the situation, and to keep improving. It's like riding a bicycle: the harder you pedal, the faster you go but the moment you stop, you fall. I have a great deal to worry about. This year the Sumy method has been introduced in many industries and - believe it or not - certain Ministries have adjusted the norms to the plan. Again! This amounts to emasculating the self-support principle of its meaning, with only the term left intact. The June Plenum put everything in place and provided clear-cut criteria. The main thing now is to carry on, not to stop. I am thinking about the future interrelations between the factory and the ministry, for instance. Until now, the Ministries were not responsible for the economic consequences (whether negative, or positive) of their instructions. Now we have to work together as equal partners, each paying its way.

New aspects of democratic centralism

Many forecasts are being made concerning the results of the economic reform.

A French bourgeois paper has made its contribution to futurology by likening the U.S.S.R. to a supertanker which, owing to its size, will need several kilometres of water space to execute a turn.

In the New York Times, the well-known American scientist Professor Duke Naylor expressed a view that the implementation of the Soviet economic reform will be hindered by the inexperience of Soviet economic managers, especially in conditions of decentralized planning and control. I wish the Professor had joined me in my talk with Vladimir Moskalenko - although I agree that we must learn new economic thinking, and that the reform will pose difficult tasks for both engineers and factory managers.

In the opinion of the New York Times Book Review, cancelling state control over the economy is an easy enough matter. However, this move cannot solve all the problems and is fraught with new ones.

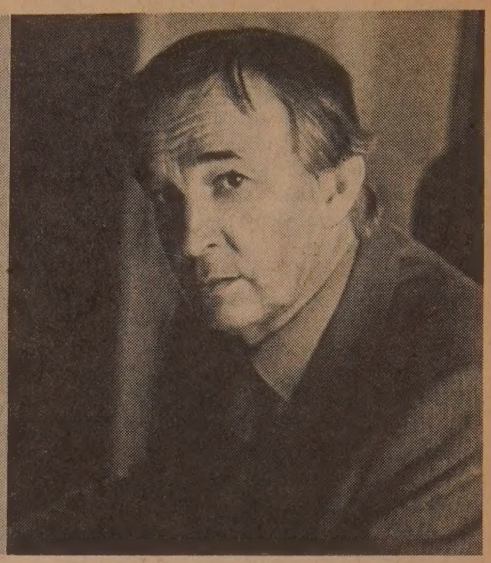
It is worth noting here that expressions like the "decentralization of Soviet planning" and "the cancellation of state control" are inaccurate. What we have here is something entirely different - the renunciation of petty tutelage by the centre over the producers. Democratic centralism, the cardinal principle underlying the management of the socialist economy, will thus be relieved of the rigid dogmatic features it has acquired.

As for the new problems arising from the renewal of our society, there is no avoiding them (and the New York Times Book Review is right about this). Reconstruction is not going to come easy.

■

WHAT IS WASHINGTON AFRAID OF?

Dialogue between GEORGI ARBATOV and VALENTIN FALIN



The series of recent public appearances by President Ronald Reagan, and especially his propaganda show in West Berlin, create the impression that the U.S. administration could retreat from what has been achieved by our countries as a result of determined mutual efforts. How well founded are these apprehensions? This is discussed by Academician GEORGI ARBATOV, Director of the Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada Studies of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, and VALENTIN FALIN, chairman of the board of the Novosti Press Agency.

Arbatov. I think that those who follow American policy have not detected anything unusual. A long-practised move has been repeated: the moment promising signs appear, the Americans immediately respond with something negative. This was the case after Geneva, when whole series of actions was initiated to undermine the accords that had been reached there. It was the case after the dramatic talks in Reykjavik. It was the case on the eve of Shultz's arrival in Moscow as well as after his departure for home.

It is difficult to understand what Reagan wants. On the one hand, it is reasonable to suppose that he would like to go down in history as a great president - and today this means as a peacemaker as well - by concluding an agreement on disarmament and holding a summit. On the other hand, he appears to wish to achieve this at the expense of the other side, retaining his old views. And, most importantly, retaining his old policy. And it is this that has found its reflection in his latest speeches. A further point is characteristic: he tries to present the new elements that have now appeared in international affairs as a success for his old power policy, a policy that has in fact demonstrated its untenability. He intimates that the U.S.A. has stood firm and that as a result chances of disarmament and normalization of relations have appeared. This is sheer nonsense.

But something else occurs to me as being even more important. We do not need the United States as an enemy. It is even better for us to have it as a partner although, as experience shows, we can do without it. But the United States needs the Soviet Union as an enemy. And it needs this very badly. And not only for the obvious reasons - only the existence of an enemy can justify the huge military expenditures and political ventures. It can even be said that present-day America needs an enemy for its internal calm and mental balance. For only by having an "empire of evil" somewhere can one consider oneself an "empire of good." And when suddenly this enemy image begins to fall apart, when public feeling begins to change in Europe and even in the United States, the administration starts to feel like a beached fish. So I think Reagan's speeches are largely an attempt to respond to these changing moods. To respond in the old way, rudely, and I would even say unacceptably rudely. But in addition to this, I see in these speeches the usual blackmail of an American cowboy, who threatens the other side with the aim of getting something more out of it, albeit only a trifle.

Falin. The crux of the matter is that one Reagan has not come to terms with another Reagan. The "old" Reagan, who absorbed everything that was negative in the past, is incapable of breaking with that past, although the realities of the situation demand such a break, and a prompt one at that. Hence the endless vacillation, the attempts to explain the changes not in terms of the movement of the sides towards one another and towards reasonable solutions, but by contentions that America has supposedly reached the peak of its might and is reaping the fruit of its militaristic efforts. These are attempts to reconcile something that is irreconcilable, to pass off an obsolete philosophy as a cure for pressing problems of the present and the future.

Arbatov: I would say that the candle is burning at both ends. At the one end, the old image of the Soviet Union created over whole decades to serve the policy of cold war is gradually burning out. This process is a slow one. It is amazing how slowly the Americans learn of news from the Soviet Union. Still, the truth is seeping through, it is reaching them and I think this process will pick up speed. These are the natural results of new phenomena in Soviet society - openness, the drive for renewal and the new political thinking.

The image of the U.S. administration is the other end of the candle. Here the flame is burning ever more brightly and visibly, and destroying this image. I do not mean the time factor, the fact that the administration's days are numbered by the Constitution. I am referring primarily to that administration's credibility. There is one scandal after another. Irangate is only beginning to gather momentum. But already the extreme right-wingers have been very seriously compromised. Something I have long suspected is taking place: the extreme right-wingers, all those extremists and moralizers always turn out in the end to be cheats. This was the case with Senator McCarthy, and the people in the Nixon administration, and it is happening now as well. A very horrifying thing has come to light in the process and

shocked many: the foreign policy of the United States and to a certain extent its military policy as well, are shaped not by the cabinet and the President, as is required by the Constitution, but by a group of private individuals who are answerable to no one, or by civil servants with extremely right-wing views holding posts of secondary importance. They send streams of arms to the most dangerous places, and make the United States a participant in disgraceful deals, and dangerous conflicts and ventures.

Quite naturally all this cannot but undermine America's prestige.

I am saying this because this too can explain President Reagan's speeches in West Berlin. Nobody does such things without being exposed to some sort of pressure. Something is wrong politically and morally, and indeed in terms of economics. The uneasiness of U.S. business circles, their fear that very unpleasant things lie ahead is extremly characteristic. One of the reasons for this is the United States' tremendous budget deficit and national debt, as well as the decline of its competitiveness. In short, there are many things that spell trouble.

So I think that proceeding from all this Reagan, or rather those who orchestrate his speeches, have decided that it is necessary to put on a show of high spirits, to demonstrate that the old policy, the "old" Reagan are alive and kicking. That is why the propaganda show was staged in West Berlin.

Falin. The very choice of venue is symptomatic. In the American scale of values West Berlin was for a long time a regulator of international temperature. Hence the labels attached to it during the cold-war period, such as "the cheapest nuclear bomb," "an arrow driven into the live tissue of the G.D.R." and so on.

The defensive measures taken by our friends in the G.D.R. in 1961, and they were also asked to do this by their allies in the Warsaw Treaty, were entirely of the nature of a response. The establishment of control of the border drastically reduced the possibilities of using West Berlin in subversive activities against socialist states and at the same time forced many people in West Berlin and beyond it to think about the future. The conclusions were drawn many years later. The situation stabilized and West Berliners were the first to gain from this.

But now the President of the United States is reverting to the past and trying to take West Berlin and with it the whole situation in Central Europe back at least twenty years to the time when very acute crises had flared up both around and in the city. I need only recall that in October 1961, when the Americans were contemplating tearing down the defensive installations on the border, mankind found itself literally 200 metres from World War III.

Yet another thing. It is not fortuity that Reagan has resorted to rhetoric and demagoguery, and that in West Berlin. He has thereby avoided giving a substantive answer to the initiatives and proposals only recently formulated in the documents of the Berlin meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of Warsaw Treaty countries.

In short, he has chosen the easiest, most tried and tested path, but a fruitless one.

Arbatov. What surprised me most in that speech was what he said about Berlin and Germany. Without any sense of history. He forgot the realities, he forgot the things that are so tenacious in the memory of all of us, both Europeans and many Americans. I can even picture it. He stands with his back to the Brandenburg gates. To his right is the monument to fallen Soviet soldiers, with the Reichstag just a little further away. But the speech is only about the "courageous Berliners" and the historic traditions of Berlin, about the cruel division of the continent, and there is not a word about everything that surrounds him. But every stone there is a witness to the history of fascism and the history of war, the history of Berlin as the capital of blood-stained fascism, the source of the terrible danger against which the anti-Hitler coalition fought. Repeated in a way in West Berlin was the scene at the cemetery of SS men in Bitburg, when President Reagan visited it two years ago, which sparked off worldwide indignation.

Falin. Inded, without Bitburg there would have been no speech in West Berlin. But, incidentally, had not the United States betrayed the decisions taken by the anti-Hitler coalition during and after the war, there would have been no Bitburg and no division of Europe into opposed groupings. In January 1949, when the two German states did not yet exist, John Foster Dulles stated that the problem of Berlin could be resolved at any moment. But he said that in terms of propaganda the absence of a solution to this problem was advantageous to the United States. Dulles said further that if the problem of Berlin were settled it would be necessary to tackle the problem of Germany as a whole, and immediately take up the Russian proposal that all occupation forces be withdrawn and Germany returned to the Germans.

At the time when full responsibility for future development rested with the four victor powers, Washington did not want to "return" the whole of Germany to the Germans. Instead it decided to set up a separate West German state, rearm it and turn it into the main military ally of the United States in Western Europe. Because, as was recorded in U.S. government documents of the time, the Germans alone were capable of waging armed struggle against the U.S.S.R. and on them alone could the Americans rely. It appears that to this day some people in the United States view the function of an armed landsknecht in the east as the optimum historic mission of the F.R.G. and American policy in Europe.

And what do they think about this in Bonn? It is difficult to decipher the innermost thoughts of the leaders on the Rhine. But their actions speak for themselves. The F.R.G. held out longest of all in the NATO bloc against giving consent to the Soviet "double zero option" - the elimination of medium-range missiles and operational-tactical missiles with a range of over 500 km. When it did finally give its consent it made one reservation: to retain the American nuclear warheads on the 72 Pershing 1A missiles because these are supposedly the weapons of a "third party." If this happens there will be a double violation of the provisions of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty: a violation by the Federal Republic of its commitment not to possess nuclear arms and by the United States of its commitment not to hand over nuclear arms to anyone.

Arbatov. I think this is a diplomatic manoeuvre to prevent agreement. The U.S.S.R. has displayed the maximum of good will and done everything possible. It appears that we are approaching a result but that this result is eluding us. Like a shadow, it cannot be caught. They are forever finding something else to create a new obstacle to agreement. Why? I am beginning to have the impression that there are still influential forces in Washington that want to and can sabotage even the will of the President, the more so when it is displayed so sluggishly, hesitantly and inconsistently. These forces do not want agreements simply out of principle. No military considerations play any role here because we are dealing with a very small part of the nuclear arsenal. They are panicking at the very thought of the possibility of reaching an agreement. Because it would show that apart from building up nuclear arms it is also possible to reduce them, to discard even whole classes of nuclear arms as dangerous and needless ballast.

Falin. In West Berlin Reagan decided to use as his trump card the phrase "We will bury you," once pronounced by Nikita Khrushchev. There is no need to trouble the remains of Nikita Khrushchev when we all remember the words of the living and acting President of the United States, who has repeated many times that they will relegate communism to the "ash heap of history." The dream of "burying" us characterizes many of Reagan's latest statements.

If we are to assess the President's speech in West Berlin as a whole, like the preceeding speech in Washington on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, or Reagan's address to

Americans in connection with the conference of the Seven in Venice, made after Berlin, we will see that all these exercises in rhetorics have one common denominator - adherence to positions-of-strength delusions. Not to a mentality but to the delusions and dogmas that prevent the United States from making the long overdue step forward. The step that is expected of it by its allies and its own public. It may well be that the inability to take off the blinkers will long make itself felt in Washington's actions.

Arbatov. This was definitely felt in Reagan's concept of freedom, which he interprets, so to say, in the social-Darwinian sense, exclusively as the freedom of the strong to do as they wish. So if there is an obstacle, let it vanish as quickly as possible. If the United Nations is an obstacle - down with the United Nations. The U.S. will not pay its dues, it will put pressure on U.N. personnel, introduce rules there that will make the Organization's normal work impossible. It does not like the International Labour Organization - it will withdraw from it. The same goes for UNESCO. The International Court of Justice has made a ruling that runs counter to the wishes of the United States - it will pointedly ignore its rulings, if international law cramps its style - to hell with it. Such is freedom as Reagan sees it. This is a dangerous "freedom" because it is incompatible with the elementary rules of human coexistence, especially in our age when the world has become so brittle, interdependent and vulnerable.

You mentioned Reagan's promise to relegate communism to the ash heap of history. But he has yet another pet phrase: the East and the West mistrust each other not because they are armed; they are armed because they mistrust each other.

Historically, of course, one cannot deny that there was a time when people began to make arms in response to mistrust. But all this has the same relevance to the present situation, to modern armaments, as the first wooden wheel to a jet plane. Now if we take Soviet-American relations, I do not hesitate to say that the prime cause of mistrust between them is the arms race. On its own it is the main source of mistrust. So today no confidence-building measure can be more important, no contribution to the cause of real freedom can be greater than ending the arms race.

Perhaps there were other motives, but I am deeply convinced that everything began with the first atomic bomb dropped by the Americans on Japan. At that time we deduced (and subsequently the correctness of this was confirmed by many declassified documents) that the explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not the last blasts of World War II but the first salvoes of the cold war and maybe even of the real war that the atomic maniacs were already planning against us at the time. They thought this demonstration of strength would teach the Russians to "play ball" by the new rules. I am quoting almost verbatim the then U.S. Secretary of War Stimson. So what Reagan is saying today about trust and the arms race is nothing but political triteness. There can be no trust without disarmament.

I cannot fail to mention another factor which today greatly impedes trust. The Soviet side is behaving in good faith, it is doing everything to make it possible for real changes to take place and real results to appear in the main direction - that of disarmament. But the other side is dishing out to us endless abstract talk about freedom and the division of the European continent. Why? They forever want to tell us that whatever we propose the ball still remains in our court. And no matter how much we do they always want us to do more.

Falin. Herr Todenhoefer, a well-known West German politician on the right wing of the CDU, openly says that the U.S.S.R. has not yet made enough proposals and has not taken enough steps to meet the position of the West. Recently he told the DPA agency: "Now it is the turn of the Soviet Union to express gratitude for the big credit of trust given it by the West Europeans." He was referring to the F.R.G. government's consent to the "double zero option." Todenhoefer gives us a cue as to how to express our "gratitude" - "to carry out an undelayed and for the most part unilateral reduction of the Warsaw Treaty's superiority in conventional armaments."

To begin with, there isn't any superiority of the Warsaw Treaty in conventional armaments. Herr Todenhoefer is having difficulty with his arithmetic. And, secondly, as has already been noted, the West Germans have not yet decided at all that the "zero option" should be a truly double one.

Arbatov. This constant political game gives food for serious thought first of all because all this is happening at a time when the time is running out and the administration has less and less of it left. This is what makes the present juncture so crucial. And it is very important for this to be uderstood. I think this understanding is gradually gaining ground, despite all the obstacles - both in Europe and in rather extensive circles of the American public. People see that the constant zigzags in policy do nothing to bring positions of the two sides closer together and, most importantly, do not enhance trust in the United States. There is an obvious dearth of real policy. The world, however, needs and demands a policy of real action.

(This dialogue is based on Arbatov's and Falin's appearance in the Studio No.9 programme of Soviet Central Television presented by political commentator Professor Valentin Zorin.)

■

RIPOSTE

Having second thoughts

It is indeed difficult to say how many times Washington has used the verification aspect of the disarmament problem to accuse Moscow of intransigence. Is the U.S. administration ready to stick to its own proposals as regards verification of the agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles on which the Soviet Union and the United States are now working? Doubts on that score are being voiced increasingly often by both the public and political quarters in the United States and Western Europe.

According to an influential U.S. political scientist, the Washington Establishment believes that the U.S. proposals concerning inspection by both sides of plants producing missile equipment, depots and proving grounds, as well as military installations in third countries, run counter to U.S. interests. These were rash proposals, we learn, put forward in the belief that Moscow would reject them out of hand.

This is the prevailing view in Congress, too. Dante Fascell, chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, said, for instance, that were he in Reagan's place he would think twice before coming out with such proposals. He already visualizes a bevy of Soviet inspectors snooping round American proving grounds, and the like.

The Old World, this political scientist opines, is not ready either for Soviet representatives with a carte blanche from the United States for inspection and verification.

Why these sudden fears?

The same political expert dotted the i's when he said: Before looking under somebody's bed, you have to make sure you have nothing to hide under your own.

MIKHAIL PUTINKOVSKY

SOUTH KOREA

Zig-zag-ging

THOUGH THE BLOODTHIRSTY REGIME STILL RULES IN SOUTH KOREA AND 40,000 U.S. TROOPS WITH THEIR NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE STILL STATIONED IN THE COUNTRY, THERE CAN BE NO CERTAINTY THAT THIS WILL CONTINUE.

Throughout the three weeks since President Chun Doo Hwan announced his successor, the entire country has been in turmoil. The students, who were first to demonstrate, have now been joined by factory and office employees and people from the middle classes. Attempts to perpetuate the dictatorship by sugaring the pill with the president's voluntary resignation has provoked unanimous protest. Free elections top the list of democratic reforms demanded.

The distinguished U.S. news analyst Joseph Harsch takes it for granted: "Washington is the superpower within whose orbit the government and people of South Korea revolve." Hence his "incontrovertible" premise: "The U.S. has the right of any imperial power to intervene in the internal domestic affairs of one of its protegés and clients."

This has certainly been the case up to now, starting with the U.S. puppet Syngman Rhee. Now the way is being cleared for yet another dictator, Roh Tae Woo. In its statement, the opposition Reunification Democratic Party notes: "It is the first act of a political scenario that is aiming at eternalizing the current dictatorial regime."

The Washington Post observes that the U.S. always backs the strong man, and that inasmuch as Chun passionately desires to legalize his regime, the Reagan Administration is ready to go along with him. But, the paper adds, the Koreans have evidently decided to take the matter in hand themselves. The Philippines have given a worthy example in this respect. The above-mentioned news analyst Joseph Harsch observes in turn: "If the Shah had been 'encouraged' toward more democratic rule sooner, his family might still be on the peacock throne in Teheran, and we might have been spared the Ayatollah."

This explains Washington's zigzags and overtly wait-and-see stance, which does not rule out a "democratic solution" should one prove necessary, provided, of course, U.S. influence and military presence remain intact.

The present dictator is naturally relying on force. However, considering the surging tide of resistance, Washington fears this may trigger off a civil war and inevitably intensify the already widespread anti-American mood, and not just inside the country. This appears to be a new element which cannot be ignored.

The other day the world learned that only at the eleventh hour had the Carter administration abandoned the idea of invading Iran by force to reinstate the Shah. This was due to the firm Soviet stand.

Once again the "Soviet factor," though in a different form, has come into play.

A major factor here, one U.S. newspaper says, is that the President's prestige has been most seriously undermined in the non-socialist countries, and this generates major problems. "What makes this decline more important is that there is a parallel increase in supporting the Soviet peace policies coming from the same quarters." According to the paper, Washington's politicians are seen by the public as "double-dealers," "hypocritical and duplicitous" people and "dangerous and aggressive players." As a result, it notes, "the opposition to Reaganism is at an all-time high, worldwide."

Hence the United States' desire to disown its puppet's dictatorial habits and cajole Koreans into believing, despite previous experience, that the U.S. is for democracy. This explains the quiet diplomacy and declared wish "to lean everyone" in South Korea. At the outset Washington declined even to send a representative to Seoul, thereby simulating "non-interference."However, the turmoil made it necessary to review this approach and a few days later President Reagan sent Chun a message expressing "concern" about the events and urging a prudent response to the mass action. Meanwhile Congress produced a resolution urging "an effective move towards democracy." Secretary of State George Shultz has declared that the U.S. is involved in the "extremely complex process" of South Korea's transfer to democratic rule. However, the main "complexity" here is to prevent the genuinely democratic expression of the popular will, or, as the NBC commentator put it, not provoke the opposition and not create conditions for its consolidation.

The purpose of all these complex stratagems disguised as democratization is to retain South Korea as a crucial outpost in the military chain stretching from Japan to the Philippines and Australia.

Unpredictable changes are jeopardizing the U.S. Pacific strategy, of which the South Korean dictatorship has until now been a major prop. Today this dictatorship is desperately trying to keep afloat.

YURI GUDKOV

"Still dead ahead, sir!"

Cartoon by Vsevolod Arsenyev

FRANCE - F.R.G.

Project "double harness"

CHANCELLOR HELMUT KOHL'S PROPOSAL TO SET UP A JOINT FRANCO-WEST GERMAN FORCE WAS TAKEN UP AT ONCE BY PRESIDENT FRANCOIS MITTERRAND, WHO HAS TERMED IT "THE EMBRYO OF A JOINT DEFENCE" AND A MOVE IN THE RIGHT-DIRECTION.

Defence Minister André Giraud, former premier Laurent Fabius and other representatives of both the ruling coalition and the opposition Socialist Party have likewise declared themselves enamoured of this military "tango."

Paris and Bonn believe the project will facilitate integration in the area of military policy. Its sponsors also hope it will help neutralize the peace movement in Western Europe and ultimately stonewall the reduction of nuclear and conventional armaments.

The formation of a joint force will inevitably subordinate French policy to NATO interests still more. Although Francois Mitterrand hastened to intimate that Paris would not be rejoining NATO's military organization, he failed to allay public fears. A broad spectrum of political forces ranging from Gaullists to Communists and including even some Socialists has voiced indignant protest.

In recent years military cooperation between Paris and Bonn has become increasingly closer. Joint military exercises are held regularly, with the next war games to take place in the F.R.G. in September. The defence ministers and officers on the general staffs of the two countries meet systematically for consultations. The Franco-West German military commission in effect meets every month. Finally, some types of military hardware are manufactured jointly and the production of arms and munition is being standardized.

That this cooperation has of late been extending increasingly to the nuclear sphere is cause for special alarm, as this may well compromise European security, without mentioning France's own independence.

With their own nuclear potential, the ruling circles of France evidently hope to dominate the process of West European integration in the field of military policy and strengthen their international standing. They have no objection to enlisting the support of the F.R.G.'s powerful industrial complex. In return, they are offering a "nuclear umbrella" for all of West Germany - which in one form or another would place on the agenda the issue of Bonn's access to, and use of, nuclear weapons.

The prominent journalist Maurice Duverger even believes Paris could equip F.R.G.-built missiles with nuclear warheads. Some have even suggested deploying French nuclear weapons in West Germany.

France's current military doctrine, which rests on the concept of "nuclear deterrence," has nothing at all in common with the independent Gaullist strategy of "defence across the board." In fact, France is being increasingly embroiled in NATO's military policy vis-á-vis Europe. The "rapid action force" that Paris has formed is earmarked for "frontline" hostilities, that is, on the borders with the socialist countries.

France closely coordinates its long-distance communication facilities with the appropriate NATO agencies. There is similar cooperation in the sphere of anti-aircraft defence. The French government's recent decision to purchase three AWACS planes from the U.S. binds France still more tightly to the NATO framework. These planes, styled anti-aircraft defence command posts and specifically designated for the detection of low altitude targets, will cost France 5.75 billion francs.

"From being defensive the deterrent force has become offensive due to its increased sophistication," French Communist Party General Secretary Georges Marchais has declared on French television. "From the deterrent force across the board it has become a force directed against the socialist countries and the Soviet Union. Once an independent national military force, it has become a component of the Atlantic alliance and the future 'European defence.'"

EDUARD ARSENYEV

BRITAIN - IRAN

What will Uncle Sam say

THE MORE THAN MONTH-LONG DIPLOMATIC CONFLICT BETWEEN LONDON AND TEHERAN HAS EFFECTIVELY ENDED THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP ON A GOVERNMENT LEVEL.

The initial pretext for the current controversy was the detention in early May of the Iranian vice-consul in Manchester on charges of shop-lifting, assault on a policeman, and traffic violations. True, the shop-lifting charge was subsequently withdrawn. The Iranian diplomat was detained at a police station and, according to Iranian allegations, beaten up. The arrest of a diplomat is in itself a violation of internaional law, in particular, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, to which Britain has officially subscribed.

Several days afterwards, the "guardians of the Islamic revolution" stopped the car of a British diplomat in Teheran and beat him up, which is again a violation of the Vienna Convention. Although the Iranians claimed that they had long had the detained British diplomat under observation and that this was not tit for tat, London believed there was only one possible construction to put on the incident.

This sparked off a further round of tit-for-tat measures, among them the closure of the Iranian consulate in Manchester, whose staff returned home, the expulsion of British diplomats from Teheran, and the recall of diplomats on both sides. Each side has now only one diplomat left, who is to deal exclusively with consular affairs.

This is not the first time the bilateral relationship has been strained. In 1980, in solidarity with the U.S. after a group of Iranians broke into the U.S. embassy and seized hostages, the British decided to "markedly lower" the level of diplomatic relations with Teheran.

This reminder is not fortuitous, inasmuch as the currently strained relationship coincides with Washington's buildup of its military presence in the Persian Gulf and its appeal to its Western allies to follow suit and by the same token isolate Teheran diplomatically. Incidentally, London not only promised the White House "diplomatic support," but also in mid-May alerted its naval forces

in the region. The British government's desire to exert pressure on Teheran is obvious. If London's current demarches vis-a-vis Iran have indeed been prompted by its solidarity with the United States, the consequences are unlikely to please the architects of British foreign policy. Indeed, the notorious "East of Suez" policy, whose aim is to preserve a British presence in the region, is teetering. In the space of three years London has broken off diplomatic relations with three countries in the area - with Libya in 1984, Syria in 1986, and now Iran. Critics of Margaret Thatcher's new cabinet argue with reason that, inasmuch as Britain gets only five per cent of its total oil consumption via the Persian Gulf, it is hardly advisable to maintain a British military presence there. Nor, it should be added, would this serve to reduce tensions in the area. However, the indications are that Whitehall still prefers to conduct its foreign policy with an eye on Washington.

YURI KUDIMOV

INDIA - CHINA

Clearing the air

N.D. TIWARI, INDIA'S MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS VISITED PEKING IN MID-JUNE.

Narayan Datt Tiwari met with Deputy Premier Wan Li, Acting Premier of the P.R.C. State council, and Liu Shuqing, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The purpose of the visit was to disperse the clouds that had gathered in the mountain country where China's Tibet and the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh meet.

For weeks on end news agencies have reported border incidents, and Chinese and Indian troop concentrations reminiscent of those during the 1962 war. The P.R.C. Deputy Premier has admitted that "a number of incidents" have in fact taken place. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said the situation on the Chinese border could not be described as normal. Western papers found witnesses who had seen wounded soldiers and heard warlike calls by commanders. Some comments suggested not so much concern over "strained Sino-Indian relations" as a desire to capitalize on the tensions. There are forces that wish grave problems upon India and China - and, incidentally, on others as well.

The border disputes go back to 1914 when the British colonial authorities drew the "McMahon line" on a map as the border between India and Tibet. In 1962, a territorial problem led to a short border war.... In 1981, seven rounds of bilateral talks were held but they were unsuccessful. In the meantime, border incidents were reported regularly.

As it was unofficial, Tiwari's visit resulted in no formal diplomatic documents. Nevertheless, both sides expressed their desire to improve relations across the board. It was admitted that the settlement of a border conflict might take time but it was agreed that these issues should be resolved through peaceful negotiations only, in accordance with the five principles of peaceful coexistence; the commitment to peace and tranquility along the whole length of the Indo-Chinese border was reaffirmed. The Delhi press is now speculating that N.D. Tiwari will soon be able to pay a well-prepared official visit to Peking and hold serious consultations on the border issue at Foreign Ministerial level.

Stability lies not in maintaining military confrontation, but in conducting talks, however complex.

LEV YELIN

SOUTH PACIFIC

There's no getting away from politics

THE SESSION OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM HELD IN APIA, WESTERN SAMOA'S CAPITAL, CAME CLOSE TO BREAKING UP AS A RESULT OF THE MILITARY TAKE-OVER IN FIJI.

However, though the issue of what attitude to take to this development was raised, it did not dominate, inasmuch as the small island states that comprise the majority at the Forum, were generally unwilling to involve themselves in politics. Again and again delegates emphasized that the Forum had been set up as an agency for regional economic cooperation and development, and not as a "branch of the U.N." Nonetheless, as economics are inseparable from politics, it must be asked what direction the discussion of political issues took.

In recent years the trend has been towards nuclear disarmament and the attainment at least of regional security. The final communiqué shows that the approach to the solution of certain regional issues has much in common with the Soviet proposals formulated by Mikhail Gorbachev in Vladivostok.

The forum drafted and concluded the now famous Rarotonga Treaty to de-nuclearize the South Pacific. The present Labour governments in Australia and New Zealand strenuously contrtibuted to this. True, they introduced a provision entitling each country to decide independently whether or not to grant port access to nuclear powered ships, or ships with nuclear weapons on board. This refers in particular to U.S. ships.

This time the Australian Prime Minister sought to raise the issue of the "Lybian threat" in the region, a point continually harped on by the bourgeois news media in the fifth continent. The reason for this is that the Vanuatu government is planning to allow Libya to open a diplomatic mission. Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs William Hayden went out specially to meet New Zealand leader David Lange. Lange, however, observed calmly that he "knew more" than the Australians, and believed there were no grounds for concern. Meanwhile Vanuatu Prime Minister Walter Lini, dismayed by such blatant interference in his country's internal affairs, declared that if the Forum discussed the "Lybian threat," it would immediately disintegrate.

The Forum condemned the continued French nuclear tests on the Mururoa atoll and called on Paris to end them.

Nor was it deluded by the French decision to hold a referendum in New Caledonia on September 13 on the question of independence, as this would merely lead to serious clashes between the Kanaka and French communities. The Forum suggested organizing the referendum under the aegis of the U.N. on the basis of the principles of self-determination and independence.

ALEXEI IVKIN

Sydney

Towards reconciliation

The six-month period of cease-fire, announced in mid-January by the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan within the context of the policy of national reconciliation to bring calm to the long-suffering country and give its people the chance to live and work in peace, is almost at an end. Although the counterrevolutionary extremists have ignored the cease-fire and the republic's armed forces have been compelled to repulse them, the official cease-fire is to be prolonged to give "the other side" another chance.

A draft constitution to be put to a nationwide referendum has been prepared. Najib told the second meeting of the Supreme Commission on National Reconciliation late last month that an edict would soon be promulgated to legalize the political parties now operating underground and enable new political parties to form, provided they adhere to the common goal of bringing an early peace to Afghanistan, see to it that armed force is no longer used, and ensure national sovereignty, independence, a policy of non-alignment and the consolidation of the traditional relations of friendship with the country's northern neighbour, the U.S.S.R. In Kabul, for instance, the clergy are reported to be preparing to set up a new peace-making, popular party. Conditions are also ripe for the emergence of a peasant party.

The Afghan government is prepared to establish contacts with all forces and elements, including royalists, that adhere to national patriotic traditions. The ruling People's Democratic Party has announced that it is ready to share power with representatives of the opposition, with all national patriotic elements. The process of integrating the opposition forces into the system of government has already started at grassroots level, from villages up to districts and provinces. Incidentally, the central government itself has five ministers who served under previous regimes.

Is the policy producing tangible results? By the end of last month 1,335 villages had been peacefully withdrawn from the area of hostilities. More than 60,000 refugees have returned home, despite obstruction by Pakistani troops and the Iranian "guardians of the Islamic revolution." Some 25,000 members of armed units have voluntarily surrendered and are now either engaged in peaceful work or defending the country from bandit raids. Local authorities are in contact with many opposition armed groups and are negotiating terms of reconciliation.

Many who have hitherto fought against the government are now having second thoughts. Below our Delhi correspondent describes how an Afghan emigré leader eventually came to see the light.

ALEXANDER USVATOV

He has seen the light

"I, Rafiullah Tokhi, a former captain in the Afghan royal army, former deputy chief of the Islamic Military Front based in Pakistan and currently information chief of the Islamic Unity of Afghan Mujaheddin in India, solemnly declare today that by the will of Allah and the bidding of my own conscience I fully accept the policy of national reconciliation conducted by the government of Afghanistan as an entirely humane Islamic policy. For this reason I have decided to end my anti-national activity and voluntarily return home to Afghanistan." So began the confession of a man whose face has often been identified in recent years at the head of crazed crowds of "Afghan patriots" congregating in Delhi, now outside the Soviet embassy, now outside the embassy of Afghanistan.

After his news conference I interviewed Rafiullah.

He has now turned 35. Before the April Revolution he was a brilliant army officer. It cannot be said that he was an out-and-out opponent of the revolution, as he realized that it could liberate his ancient land from its feudal shackles. But as he was unable to find a place for himself in the revolutionary process, in 1981 he secretly emigrated to Pakistan.

In Peshawar Pakistani authorities welcomed him with open arms. A few days after his arrival, he was introduced to a tall blond individual who, he was told, was an American friend. This gentleman said he would like to be known simply as Jerry. He explained that he was helping Afghan patriots to set up the Islamic Military Front and that he wanted to know whether Rafiullah as a military man would agree to accept the post of deputy chief. Rafiullah signed a pledge and received some money.

There were sorties across the border into Afghanistan. The loot was brought back to Peshawar. However, to be a marauder was demeaning for an officer. And what about the purity of Islam?

One day in July 1983 Jerry visited him at the camp. He said publicity should be created for the movement, as the outside world did not have much faith in the reports coming from Pakistan. He added that as there were Afghan refugees in India as well, protests should be organized there, from the territory of a prestigious non-aligned country. Rafiullah agreed.

In Delhi he was appointed information chief of the Islamic Unity of Afghan Mujaheddin, which incorporates in one form or another some 3,000 Afghans resident in the Indian capital. With money brought in clandestinely from Pakistan, Rafiullah published an emigré newspaper, engineered demonstrations outside the Soviet and Afghan embassies, and sought to indoctrinate the public in the spirit needed for the counterrevolution.

Meanwhile, India's democratic news media, along with many other unbiassed publications, reported that a new way of life was emerging in Afghanistan. At night, Rafiullah told me, it struck him more and more often that the principles for which he had struggled were being implemented in his homeland.

News of the initial results of the policy of national reconciliation threw the local Afghan emigrés into confusion. Whereas earlier it had been possible to get several hundred to demonstrate, now he could barely muster a few dozen. Rafiullah wondered whose side they were on.

The policy of national reconciliation caused the last scales to fall from his eyes.

"I call upon all my duped and deluded compatriots," Rafiullah Tokhi concluded, "to follow suit and discard misconceived patriotic and religious sentiments. We must live among our own people and play our part in the renewal of our ancient land."

LEONID ZHEGALOV

Delhi

In a few days' time Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov goes to Austria on an official visit. Trade and economic cooperation will feature prominently among the issues to be discussed.

A reliable client

Except for the fact that both are situated on the Danube, Linz and Korneuburg seem to have nothing in common. The former is a sprawling conglomeration of high-rise glass and concrete buildings. The latter is a small, cosy town, delightfully old-fashioned in both appearance and life-style.

As much as 150 kilometres apart, they are even in different federal lands: one is in Upper Austria and the other in Lower Austria. Nonetheless, they are almost always mentioned in a single breath. Linz and Korneuburg are related by the shipbuilding trade. The Österreichische Schiffswerften AG. Linz-Korneuburg dockyards located there belong to the same joint-stock company.

It was founded after World War II as a branch of the country's major concern, Vöst-Alpine. The company has steadily expanded production throughout the postwar period and today enjoys great prestige in business circles both in Austria and elsewhere.

I got to know Dr Alois Hager, the joint-stock company's director-general, ten years ago in Korneuburg at the ceremonial raising of the Soviet flag over the motorship Moldavia which was built there. Later I met him repeatedly both in Austria, at launchings of ships constructed there to Soviet commercial orders, and in Moscow, where he comes on business so often that he can't even remember the number of times he has been here.

"Our yards commissioned their 100th ship for the Soviet Union ten years ago," Dr Hager recalls. "It had taken us nearly 30 years to build so many vessels of different classes for the U.S.S.R. Just a decade later, we are about to complete the two hundredth."

The Linz-Korneuburg dockyards, Dr Hager says, are not large in international terms, but are considerable by Austrian standards. This is not just because of the volume of its production and workforce and its advanced technological level. The company's greatest asset is its experienced engineers, technicians, foremen and workers, whose skills make it possible to fulfil even the most challenging and urgent orders adequately and on time. All this is a solid basis for success.

"As for cooperation with the Soviet Union, the output figures speak for themselves," Dr Hager goes on. "I can only add that we have not had and are unlikely ever to have another regular customer of such importance. We realize this especially clearly now that international shipbuilding, especially in Europe, is living through a very hard time."

The director-general took me on a tour of the Korneuburg shipbuilders' latest creation - the Georgi Agafonov river-sea transport, which has just slid down the slipways. Berthed at the moorage wall of the yard's cove, it is as long as a soccer pitch. "Such ships have not been built in this country before," Dr Hager commented proudly. "I don't even mean the size of Georgi Agafonov, but the fact that she can carry grain, metal, containers and virtually any other kind of cargo. The ship can, for instance, be quickly converted into a car carrier and bring as many as 150 Lada, Samara and Niva cars for our motorists in just one run from Togliatti. How popular these cars are here I don't have to tell you. They are to be seen all over Austria."

One of the Georgi Agafonov's main merits is that it is equipped to carry perishable goods, especially vegetables and fruit. The high-powered refrigerators in its cargo holds can keep the temperature there as low as is required for apples, plums, tomatoes, pears, watermelons, melons and many other kinds of produce to make their journey from farm to shop in optimum conditions. Considering the vast distances in the U.S.S.R., the ship is simply indispensable, and will definitely suit its future users perfectly.

Georgi Agafonov is the first in a series of such freighters to be built by the Linz-Korneuburg yards, and is to be followed by nine more identical vessels.

"We started developing relations with the Soviet Union as early as during the first postwar years," Dr Hager says. "At first, the orders were small and mostly called for repairs on boats from the Soviet Danube shipping line. Then we began building tugs and barges. Since 1959 we have been constructing comfortable river-going liners as well. From their names one can learn not only the geography of your country (looking at such ships as the Volga, the Amur, the Moldavia and the Ukraine) but also its literature (the Chekhov, the Yesenin, the Bryusov and the Blok). These are just the names I can remember on the spur of the moment. There are, of course, many more."

Ships built at the Linz-Korneuburg dockyards cannot be called all-Austrian products, as Soviet designers, engineers and other specialists are closely involved in the building process as well. They have been coming to the shipways and workshops so regularly, that they are not even regarded as "visitors" any more. Moreover, the sundry equipment installed on craft built at the Linz-Korneuburg facilities invariably includes some Soviet-made mechanisms and systems.

"What we particularly appreciate," the shipyard's director-general said at the end of the interview, "is the large scale of cooperation with the Soviet Union and its reliability as a business partner. To be sure, we have other clients as well.For instance, we have built luxury yachts for oil sheikhs. But one swallow doesn't make a summer. Without the prospect of and confidence in a secure future, life is bad, even, indeed, impossible."

ANATOLY KOVRIGIN,
our special correspondent

Linz-Korneuburg-Moscow

Another ship built for the U.S.S.R. on the slipway.

TASS photo

A distress call ignored

- **Turning a deaf ear and unconcerned mind.**
- **The system of taboos in the West.**
- **Sincere means right.**
- **Is international cooperation possible in an arena of confrontation?**

VLADIMIR LOMEIKO

The history of civilization is a history of increased awareness of the interrelationship of the destinies of nations as members of the same human family. The common troubles and dangers threatening different countries and peoples have contributed more than anything else to their realization that they belong together. After passing through the crucible of World War II, which took a toll of tens of millions of lives and incalculable material assets, mankind has learnt to treasure common security and the unique gift of human life more than ever.

By founding the United Nations, it has made the important decision to work to create a safer and juster world.

I would like to stress two points of fundamental importance.

First. It is on the initiative of the Soviet Union that the U.N. Charter has been imbued with the very principle of respect for basic human rights and liberties. It has been formalized in the document's first article which emphasizes, among other U.N. goals, international cooperation "in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion."

Second. After a long and persistent campaign by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries the world community has approved the concept of social and economic rights being inseparable from civil and political ones.

At its 5th session the U.N. General Assembly passed a resolution stating that "when deprived of economic, social and cultural rights, a man does not represent the human person whom the Universal Declaration regards as the ideal of the free man."

This historical digression is necessary as the facts must be known, all the more so as there is no shortage of people in the world with a penchant for lecturing Moscow on human rights. To distract attention from the plight of their own unemployed and sometimes homeless compatriots and from the victims of racial and political discrimination, many statesmen and politicians in the West have taken to preaching at others, particularly socialist nations, and the greater the mess in their own countries the readier they are to do so. In this case their guiding principle seems to be to turn a deaf ear to all this.

We are not opposed to discussions and criticisms. But we believe these should be above board and characterized by a sense of responsibility and an interest in real protection for human rights rather than by demagoguery.

The days of cavalry-style attacks and incisive verbal thrusts are gone. The world has too little time left to waste on bickering and confrontational squabbling; urgent joint efforts are needed to cope with global problems.

Since mankind has invented and come to possess the means of its own annihilation, it must, for the sake of its survival, review the fundamental concepts of its existence. Cooperation takes priority over confrontation, so that concerted efforts can be made to defuse three time bombs - the continuing race in weapons of mass destruction, the widening gap in development between North and South, and the growing threat to the environment.

Different social systems have different approaches to resolving these problems. It is likewise natural that there should be different doctrines in the field of human rights.

Let each doctrine prove its human value by its fruits. We are convinced of the advantages of the socialist concept of human rights. By freeing people from exploitation, socialism creates conditions where the rights it proclaims can be realized.

Try as our ill-wishers would to denigrate socialism, they will not be able to prove to the millions of people in their own countries who are unemployed, homeless and denied proper education and medical care that the capitalist system guarantees its declared rights and freedoms to everyone. The richer capitalist powers have on their conscience not only their own poor but also millions of underprivileged people in former colonies. Each of the global problems of mankind has its particular authors, but thinking in terms of planetwide solidarity calls for action rather than recrimination.

If we acknowledge that the world is not only full of confrontation but also interdependent, we must agree that it needs cooperation to survive. While competing in the ways and means of tackling their political and social problems, the members of the world community should act together to deal with global problems of crucial significance to international peace and security. The humanitarian aspect, including human rights, is one of the foundations of international security.

At the 43rd session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, the Soviet delegation did not allow itself to be provoked into taking the path of confrontation, and made the case instead for constructive cooperation on a universal basis, that is one endorsed by the entire world community. This basis can be assured by international covenants on human rights.

What is the Soviet position?

Each nation is duty bound to provide the most favourable conditions for its citizens to exercise their rights as proclaimed by the international covenants. Countries should cooperate to implement human rights on both a bilateral and a multilateral footing, relying on international pacts and agreements on human rights. Finally, they should exchange positive experience. The Soviet Union favours constructive cooperation in the field of human rights on the international scene simply because it is the only way of ensuring the maximum benefit to man - the measure of everything and the meaning of all existence.

We do not claim that we have done away with all problems. The process of democratization is today actively developing in the U.S.S.R.

One of the more important changes is perhaps that each of us has begun to feel himself to be a **citizen** of his socialist Fatherland much more keenly. This enhanced sense of civic responsibility taps new reserves of social energy, and this is beginning to be released, with people

coming to realize that much more depends on each of us in the workplace, the country and the world than we used to think. More and more people have begun boldly voicing their opinions on different aspects of life, no longer afraid of going against the current and openly disagreeing with what they see as an injustice, great or small.

Lenin wanted working people to learn "to **fight for their rights** fully in accordance with the rules of **the struggle for rights** allowed by law in the R.S.F.S.R. (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic)." The wave of democratization that has awakened public consciousness in the country has also revealed this fact: the problem is not any lack of rights but people's reluctance and ignorance of how to use them.

Life, we all know, is a struggle. Democracy too is a struggle for justice in life. It is only we who can build a fair society for ourselves. We understand democracy as the fullest exploitation of human rights and freedoms and the liberation of the energy of the individual and society from the vices of apathy and indifference.

Taking part in the 43rd session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, the Soviet delegation has been able to see for itself the immense interest shown by people from all continents in the reconstruction and democratization under way in the U.S.S.R. These processes are perceived as reflecting a new way of thinking on many questions, among them human rights.

Global dangers imperilling all mankind make it essential to revise the order of priorities in the field of human rights. Prime importance has been acquired by rights that are imperative if the human race is to survive.

These include above all the **right to live in peace and security.**

These include the **right to development based on justice:** the increasing gap between rich and poor is leading to economic and social upheavals that threaten global cataclysms.

These include the **right to a worthy habitat:** environmental pollution portends irreversible consequences that threaten life on Earth.

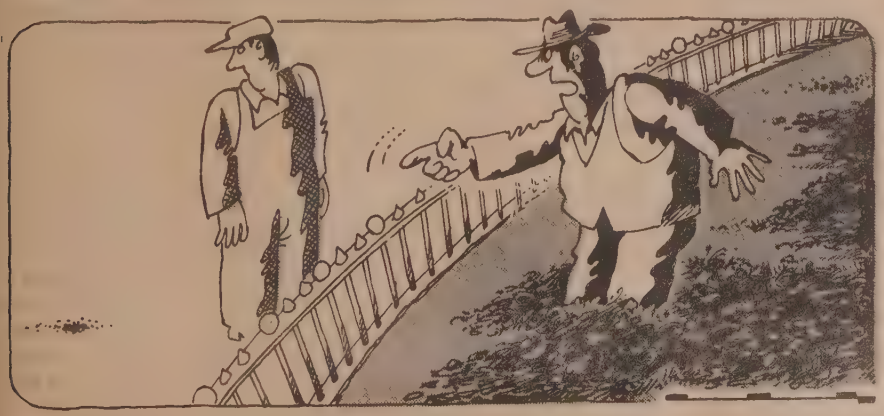
The more farsighted among us have been warning the world of these problems for decades. But the disturbing tocsin of the alarm have not been heeded by everyone. Too many politicians have failed to abandon their customary pursuit of the chimeras of power, wealth and vanity, unable to rise above long-standing prejudices in order to perceive and fend off new, much more terrible problems.

The overriding issue today is a dearth of new thinking, a dearth of political realism in the West. The old mentality is continuing to do harm, this applying also to those who underestimate the global threats hanging over mankind.

To reject or be wary of the ideas and proposals of others just because they come from an ideological opponent, without considering the fact that they serve the sacred common goal of protecting civilization and preserving life on Earth - isn't this to pay tribute to outdated, stereotyped thinking in terms of perennial confrontation?

The public and political leaders in every country must have a sense of historical responsibility not only to their own people but also to all mankind; the imperative is **not to add confrontation** to international relations, which need instead the bracing air of cooperation, and not to pass up opportunities for reaching further accords, extending common ground and strengthening confidence.

We have been sincere in our call for international cooperation in all areas, including the field of human rights. The Soviet Union has suggested convening a representative humanitarian forum in Moscow where it would be possible to discuss a wide range of urgent problems. We have been sincere in our appeals for disarmament - and have been matching our words with action. If our Western partners reciprocate each of our compromise steps and each of our concessions prompted by a strong sense of responsibility for the future of mankind, together we will move further along the path to a nuclear-free world and hence come closer to ensuring the right to life.



Drawing by N. Shcherbakov

If part of the money saved through disarmament is in the process directed to the fund for mankind's survival, this will be a real contribution to implementing the right of nations to development and a worthy habitat.

We live on what, so far, has been an all-forgiving planet. We have been treating it badly, as though trying to outdo each other in making it unfit for habitation by future generations. According to scientists, the content of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere since the middle of the 19th century has increased by 27 per cent. This gas keeps heat closer to the Earth, making for the hot-house effect, which carries the threat of climatic changes, with polar ice melting and the level of water in the oceans rising. The end of the century may coincide with dramatic changes in the ecological situation. We are not just polluting the environment, we are playing games with it the consequences of which we are ignorant of. While countries painstakingly protect their sovereignty on their borders, contaminated air, ignoring frontiers, makes us all hostages to our criminal attitude to nature and consequently to life on Earth. To ensure mankind's survival, a global strategy is needed to preserve a worthy habitat. This is our sacred right and our sacred duty.

All living things on Earth appeal for solidarity. The impression is that the destiny of mankind itself, hoping to instruct even the most incorrigible, sends out ever new SOS signals - calls for mutual understanding and cooperation among all members of the world community.

The AIDS epidemic which broke out only a few years ago is threatening to become the plague of the 21st century. A mere flicker only recently, it is now sweeping countries in defiance of borders like a bushfire. Seen against this background, the perversity of the very philosophy of developing ever new arms, which is a squandering of resources and of the creative energy of mankind, is especially apparent. So perhaps it is AIDS that should be the last terrifying tocsin bringing it home to people their ultimate right to self-protection.

If we all recognize the inexorable danger of this new epidemic, drop the new arms buildup programmes and spend the money thus saved on a collective search for a cure, we may rest assured that the power and solidarity of joint human thinking will very soon produce the remedy.

It is only by joint efforts that we can tackle the formidable problems that today beset our world. ■

At the moment environmental pollution is in the focus of public attention. The papers report on acid rain which has inflicted grave damage on Europe. Forests, lakes and rivers are being destroyed. Is it not possible to find an antidote to this plague of the 20th century! We seem to be in a blind alley, and it is hard to believe the countries concerned will pool their efforts, although there is hardly one that would not be interested in conserving the environment.

Nikita Chizhov
Kiev, U.S.S.R.

TAKING UP A POINT

Our associate editor ALBERT PIN replies:

Is it possible to defuse the ecological time bomb?

Many people are writing about the rapid degeneration of the environment. Every year researchers all over the world publish from 15,000 to 18,000 works on ecology, in addition to general articles appearing in papers and magazines. Environment protection has been universally recognized as an urgent global problem. Despite this, widespread ignorance of ecology has not been effectively tackled. Regrettably, it is very persistent. Moreover, very often the people responsible for economic, scientific and technological policies, who own or manage industries that have a pernicious effect on the environment, are unwilling to become enlightened on these matters.

I first encountered this problem five years ago far away from Europe - in Canada. The people of Toronto, a large industrial city on the shores of Lake Ontario, complained bitterly about the sinister acid rain. When it contaminates reservoirs it destroys practically all life - from fish to microorganisms and vegetation. It is also harmful to all that man has built and is building - automobiles, water supply systems, installations of every kind. Fighting this calamity, the Canadians deplored, is complicated by the uncooperative, to put it mildly, position of the United States. It is Canada's southern neighbour that is responsible for the greater part of the acid precipitation that falls on its territory.

At this point it would, perhaps, be appropriate to look at the origin of acid rain. The sources of this evil are fuel-burning electric power stations, industrial exhaust, and motor vehicles discharging sulphur dioxide and nitric oxides. As a result of complex chemical changes and interaction with water they produce sulphuric and nitric acids that come down with rain, snow or fog. Sometimes they fall in areas several hundred kilometres from the source of the poisonous discharges.

The Canadians say that at least half the acid rain that is killing life in Lake Ontario and other reservoirs comes from the United States. Over a period of many years Ottawa has been trying to persuade Washington to take urgent measures against this scourge. And although Washington has recognized, in words, that the problem is extremely acute for both countries, it is in no hurry to solve it. New purification plants and "pollution-free technologies" cost a lot of money. Appropriations from the U.S. federal budget for these purposes are extremely small. The companies whose coal-burning power stations and other plants poison the atmosphere are also unwilling to spend money on controlling pollution.

When I was in Canada a short while ago, I asked if Prime Minister Brian Mulroney had managed to get Reagan to adopt a more constructive stand. My friends deplored the fact that nothing had changed. The distinguished U.S. officials - Vice-President George Bush, Secretary of Treasury James Baker, and finally President Ronald Reagan - who visited Ottawa this year - listened politely to the complaints, but made no promises.

The poisoning of Canada's atmosphere by U.S. industry over a period of many years has created a disturbing situation. However, it is by no means unique. It is typical of the European continent too. In the 1960s Swedish scientists noticed that fish populations in lakes were shrinking. They established that this was due to wind-borne precipitations coming mainly from the British Isles.

The smoke stacks of the F.R.G. spew out over seven million tons of sulphur and nitrogen dioxide yearly. It is worth noting that the bulk of these poisonous compounds comes down on the territories of neighbouring countries. The F.R.G. in turn has blamed Great Britain, France and other neighbouring countries for the destruction of the Schwarzwald.

The situation is rather dismal. It should be borne in mind that acid rain kills not only forests, lakes and rivers. It inflicts tremendous damage on man's cultural, architectural and historical monuments. Over the last decade or two aggressive precipitations have virtually eroded many statues, sculptures and friezes created by artists of the distant past in Rome and other European capitals.

Finally, the harmful pollutants in the atmosphere of many European cities are a source of human suffering. A recent issue of the Italian magazine Nuova Ecologia says that to inhale nitric oxide means to expose yourself to pulmonary emphysema, chronic bronchitis, pneumosclerosis and even cancer, not to mention chronic conjunctivitis and allergy. Sulphur dioxide in turn irritates the mucous membranes of the respiratory tract and eyes. In addition, it provokes asthmatic attacks.

So there is some truth in the assertion that we are in a blind alley. Is man capable of effectively fighting soil, water and atmospheric pollution and acid rain? Is it capable of defusing the ecological time bomb?

Here are a few recent developments that inspire hope. The public movement for the protection of the environment is gaining strength. The governments of many countries have been paying increasingly keen attention to the problem. There is a growing awareness of the need for effective international cooperation in the sphere of ecology. The peoples of Europe can therefore hope that the air on the continent will get purer. In 1985 most of the European countries and Canada signed a protocol in Helsinki on reducing discharges of sulpur and trans-frontier streams of sulphurous compounds into the atmosphere. As compared with the 1980 level, the quantities of such discharges are to be reduced by 30 per cent by 1993. This will be a major

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The truce should not be broken

A letter from Colombia

The editors have received several letters from readers commenting on Alexander Baryshev's article "Victims of Condor" (New Times, Issue No. 9, 1987) dealing with the terrorist activities of right-wing extremist organizations in Colombia.

One of the letters was from **Federico Santadomingo,** a Colombian journalist, and professor of the University of Bogota. It augmented the information published by New Times. As the letter is a long one, we are publishing only a summary of it.

Federico Santadomingo writes that on May 28, 1984, a cease-fire agreement was signed by the guerrilla movement and the government, then headed by President Belisario Betancur. The truce paved the way for the development of a democratic process under the slogan of national dialogue. The left-wing progressive organizations and leaders formed a Patriotic Union, which the Communist Party supported. Together with the trade unions, it constituted the main force for democratization.

It should be mentioned that certain military circles, particularly retired generals, latifundists and pro-fascist representatives of the bourgeoisie, opposed the truce and dialogue.

In 1985 these quarters persuaded the government to use troops against the participants in the nationwide strike. People the world over shuddered as they watched the TV programme showing the army take- over of the Palace of Justice in Bogota in November 1985. Some five thousand infantrymen supported by tanks headed for the palace occupied by the guerrillas of the Movement of April 19, who had recklessly seized hostages. About 500 people died in a bloody massacre. They included not only guerrillas, but also members of the staff of the court. Colombians will never forget this bloody orgy.

Since then the country has been swept by a wave of violence. During the recent elections, paramilitary formations supported by the CIA resorted to terrorist reprisals, killing 320 activists in the progressive movement - members of the Patriotic Union.

While Colombian Communists vigorously supported the democratic changes, they angrily condemned the sallies of fascist elements out to impose a regime of fear and terror in the country. The truce should not be broken. It should grow into a really democratic peace in Colombia.

READER'S CONTRIBUTION

"A good day's catch" by our reader Wilhelm Dallmer, G.D.R.

Of reasonable sufficiency, precarious parity and international security

- What military doctrine is consonant with the dictates of the time?
- What level of armaments is sufficient for defence?
- Is strategic parity a reliable guarantee of peace?
- What should take the place of mutual nuclear deterrence?

New Times invited for a round table talk on the subject a number of former high-ranking military leaders, members today of the Soviet Generals and Admirals for Peace and Disarmament, a group functioning under the auspices of the Soviet Peace Committee.

New Times: How would you comment on the decument adopted at the Berlin meeting of the WTO Political Consultative Committee, "On the military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty member states?"

Mikhail Milstein: It is a document of enormous significance. It demonstrates to the whole world the defensive character and orientation of the mijlitary doctrine of the U.S.S.R. and its allies. Many of its basic principles are given in a new formulation, besides which the document is, so to speak, a challenge to other states, and primarily the NATO countries, to examine their own doctrines in the light of ours. Lastly, it confronts Soviet military science with major tasks: the detailed elaboration of the fundamental principles of our military doctrine, specifically its military-technological aspect.

N.T.: What is basically new in the approach of the Warsaw Treaty states?

M. Milstein: Formerly military doctrines represented the sum total of a country's views on the preparation for war, the character of the war and its prosecution. Today for the first time in history the main task set the armed forces is prevention of war. The defensive character of our doctrine is unambiguously stated.

N.T.: But other states, the NATO countries, for instance, also officially maintain that their armed forces serve defensive purposes exclusively.

M. Milstein: There is indeed no dearth of verbal assurances of this kind. The Americans and NATO as a whole go in for such declarations. But declarations are one thing, and their realization in practice is quite another. We have renounced the use of force in general to resolve outstanding issues, offensive action against any state, and have undertaken the commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. Moreover, we are ready for a structure and disposition of our armed forces in zones of contact that would, first, guarantee the other side against sudden attack, and, second, in general exclude the possibility of offensive action against it. This is an instance of new thinking, both political and military. It is a well-known fact that military thinking - let military scientists not take offence - is perhaps the most conservative and inertia-prone of all sciences.

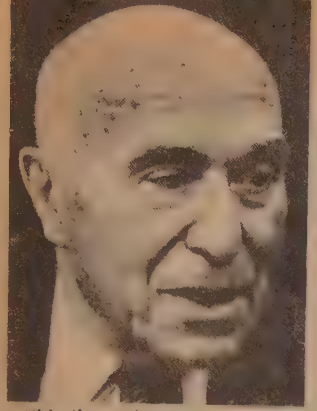
Alexander Astafyev: To my mind, the very public exposition of the fundamental principles of our military doctrine is of historical significance. After all, it has always been considered inexpedient to do this.

N.T.: Openness in the military sphere?

A. Astafyev: Precisely. The public announcement of the defensive nature of the doctrine is extremely important for a correct understanding of the aims and intentions of the U.S.S.R. and its allies. I should like to underscore the significance of the proposal to discuss the NATO and Warsaw Treaty military doctrines at representative meetings of experts. Such meetings could be the starting points for negotiations of an altogether new kind between the two blocs. So far these negotiations have amounted largely to a simple count of who has what. If, on the other hand, the character of military doctrines is discussed and compared, we would be bound to arrive at new approaches to questions of war and peace. In which case the possibility could emerge for abandoning the dangerous and futile concept of "nuclear deterrence," for instance, and proceeding to laying the foundation for a system of international security based on the nuclear-free world concept.

N.T.: Of late a new concept - "reasonable sufficiency" - has appeared in the political lexicon. It was reflected also in the documents of the Berlin meeting of the Political Consultative Committee. What exactly does it mean?

A. Astafyev: In the first place, in using the term "sufficiency" or "reasonable sufficiency" we must ask: sufficient for what? Ten years ago the then U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert McNamara calculated, with the help of experts, that for the U.S., nuclear weapons with a yield of about 200 megatons was sufficient. Sufficient for what? To destroy the key centres of the Soviet economy and



Mikhail Milstein, Lieutenant General (Ret.), Professor, D. Sc. (Warfare), chief researcher, Institute of U.S.A. and Canada Studies, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

Vadim Makarevsky, Major General (Ret.), Cand. Sc. (Warfare), senior researcher, Institute of World Economics and International Relations, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

Evgeny Nozhin, Major General (Ret.), Professor, D. Sc. (Philology), instructor at the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU Central Committee

Alexander Astafyev, Rear Admiral (Ret.), senior researcher, Institute of World Economics and International Relations, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

manpower resources. In other words, "sufficient" to destroy an entire country, its industry and people.

When the Warsaw Treaty countries, propose keeping within the limits of sufficiency, they mean sufficiency for defence. In other words, a sufficiency of military potentials that would rule out the victory of one side and the defeat of the other.

Vadim Makarevsky: This is a very complicated question, for the geographical location and historical experience of the various countries, their views on the aims and purposes of defence, their economic and other potentials have to be taken into account. The Political Consultative Committee documents, besides declaring for the prevention of war both nuclear and conventional, speak of readiness to give a crushing rebuff to the aggressor, to rule out any possibility of being taken by surprise. That means that the armed forces remain, but at a considerably lower level. In June last year the Warsaw Treaty states therefore proposed to the NATO states that the level of armed forces in Europe be lowered, their numerical strength on both sides reduced by 100,000-150,000 within the next one or two years, and by the beginning of the 1990s by roughly half a million men.

The principle of sufficiency also means ending the drive to outstrip the other side in arms development, renouncing the building up of rapid deployment and other mobile forces, and of enormous facilities for the movement of troops by air and sea.

Thus, transition to the sufficiency principle signifies lowering the existing armament level, on a parity basis, of course - parity with a tendency to lowering the level of armament to a point where neither side would have the means to wage offensive operations.

N.T.: The "sufficiency" thesis presupposes reduction but not total elimination of armed forces. How much should remain?

A. Astafyev: Reasonable sufficiency cannot be achieved only by quantitative reduction of armaments and armed forces. It is also a matter of the restructuring of the armed forces for defence, of the character of armaments, and lastly, of the military-strategic conceptions underlying the defensive military doctrines of both sides. The transition to reasonable sufficiency must proceed parallel with the establishment of a system of international security encompassing the military, political, economic, and humanitarian spheres. Before creating a non-offensive reasonable defence it is essential at least to restructure one's military potentials and revise military and political views. This will be a protracted process that must begin with the elimination of nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction. A system of international security presupposes renouncing not only nuclear weapons and nuclear war but also wars against one another in general. After all, even conventional weapons today present a terrible danger; "conventional" war in Europe would be a disaster for the whole continent.

M. Milstein: In my opinion the question of reasonable sufficiency must be tackled now. Yes, this will be a long- drawn-out process. And sufficiency in the context of the total elimination of nuclear weapons is a matter of the distant future. We know that our proposal of January 15, 1986, for the stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000 did not find due support in the West, especially among the political leadership, and among some scientists as well. Some say that nuclear weapons cannot be "de-invented," others that it is precisely thanks to nuclear weapons that war has been averted to date; still others claim that complete elimination of these weapons would give military superiority to the Warsaw Treaty countries, and there are also those who do not exclude the possibility of South Africa, Israel, Brazil and Pakistan acquiring these weapons.

Of course the total elimination of nuclear arsenals is the only real way of averting a nuclear holocaust. But it will take time to achieve this objective. Hence transition to reasonable sufficiency should proceed simultaneously with the reduction of nuclear stockpiles and also of armed forces and conventional armaments.

N.T.: What does reasonable sufficiency mean in these circumstances?

M. Milstein: In all probability it will not mean the same for all countries. Reasonable sufficiency implies possession of a military potential that, on the one hand, would be enough to safeguard the security of one's own country and, on the other, not enough to give effect to offensive plans, and especially to surprise attacks. However, considering, say, the geographical and geostrategic positions of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., reasonable sufficiency will differ in arithmetical terms. Therefore to specify exactly how many rifles, guns, tanks, aircraft and missiles each side should have is impossible at this juncture. The concrete parameters will be determined by agreement. For this purpose it is proposed to hold a meeting of experts at which, for instance, it would be necessary to agree on which armaments should be considered defensive and which, offensive. The building of armed forces, their disposition and the character of armaments should in future be determined exclusively by defensive considerations.

V. Makarevsky: One can speak of sufficiency on both a global and a regional plane. I believe that at the present time the principles of reasonable sufficiency should be elaborated only on a regional plane - in Europe with regard to NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

N.T.: In what sense could one speak of sufficiency on a global plane, in the light of the process of reducing nuclear weapons?

A. Astafyev: Here one can speak only of one thing - sufficiency for maintaining military-strategic parity. So long as the West is not prepared to renounce "nuclear deterrence" we are also obliged to have nuclear weapons - such are the "rules of the game" forced upon us. And although we do not agree with the nuclear deterrence concept and urge renunciation of it, we are willy-nilly compelled to follow its logic. After all, the purpose of our strategic forces is to deter the adversary from embarking on aggression. Whether we like it or not, mutual deterrence is a fact. And this being so let us ask ourselves: how many times is sufficient for the enemy to be destroyed - 150? 100? 15?

N.T.: ...or perhaps once is enough?

A. Astafyev: Right - sufficiency at the lowest level.

M. Milstein: Moreover peace can be preserved only if the parity between the two sides is such as to allow neither to wage offensive action. If there is an illusion of superiority, not necessarily of quantity but of technology - I have in mind the SDI programme - the irreparable could happen. So the present parity is not a guarantee of peace.

N.T.: Does that mean that the classical formula that a threefold preponderance is needed for the success of an offensive no longer applies?

M. Milstein: That preponderance applied to artillery, tanks and infantry. Today of course the approach is somewhat different. Nevertheless that formula is not wholly outdated. The necessary superiority of strength can be created on some narrow sector of the front by weakening other sectors. But if offensive means - mobile forces with aircraft and tanks - are withdrawn, as the U.S.S.R. and its allies propose, any attempt at an offensive thrust would have to be preceded by regrouping and concentration of troops, etc. This is bound to be noticed by the other side, and surprise attack would thus be excluded.

N.T.: Can Clausewitz's formula that war is the continuation of politics by other means be considered valid today when such gigantic arsenals of nuclear weapons have been accumulated?

Evgeny Nozhin: The problem of nuclear weapons has an inbuilt contradiction. We say the use of the nuclear weapon is suicidal, for the aggressor will inevitably perish from the consequences of the use of his own weapon. This has been proved scientifically. There is practically no doubt on this score any longer. In my opinion, the problem of the relation between the concepts of politics and war has acquired an entirely new dimension today.

Theoretically war is still the continuation of politics. If the Americans are preparing for war that is a continuation of their policy. If we reject war, that is precisely our policy. But theory is one thing and practice something else again. This is worth pondering over.

V. Makarevsky: On February 16 at the international forum For a Nuclear-Free World, for the Survival of Mankind, Mikhail Gorbachev said that world war has ceased to be a continuation of politics by other means. World war means nuclear war, in which all would perish. It is necessary to go over to new forms - to defence, moreover, "non-offensive defence." In other words, the Clausewitz formula is not applicable to world war. But war is nevertheless still a continuation of politics as regards local conflicts. Take the Iranian-Iraqi war - a classical illustration to Clausewitz. The Falklands war was also a continuation of politics. The Clausewitz formula remains valid also in other sphere - the arms buildup, which is also a continuation of politics.

N.T.: You mentioned "non-offensive defence." There is a great deal of talk about this nowadays. Could you dwell in greater detail on this question? What is meant by "non-offensive defence," what are its basic principles?

V. Makarevsky: It is one of the unofficial concepts being propounded in Western countries by individual scientists, non-governmental organizations and representatives of opposition parties. It is also called "non-provocative defence." Its most important principles are:

- renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons and of nuclear weapons in general;
- the withdrawal of the most dangerous, offensive armaments from the zones of proximity of the two military blocs.

Thus it is a matter not only of reducing the armed forces of the sides, but also of qualitative changes in these forces, of the elimination by mutual agreement of such types of offensive weaponry as tactical long-range bombers, tactical missiles, long-range artillery, large armoured formations, etc. In other words, a restructuring of the armed forces of the sides.

This essentially is what the Warsaw Treaty states had in mind when they proposed creating a nuclear-free corridor along the line of contact between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO forces extending for 150 kilometres on each side; withdrawing from this zone on a reciprocal basis all types of nuclear weapons - warheads, mines, operational-tactical and tactical missiles, nuclear artillery, nuclear-armed tactical strike aircraft, as well as air defence missile complexes capable of firing nuclear warheads.

Of course, it is for the military experts of each side to decide on the structure of the "non-offensive defence." Here, in my view, the creative imagination of the experts should not be limited. What is important is that the "non-offensive" principle is observed.

N.T.: Many in the West have noted the provision in the Berlin documents relating to asymmetry, the readiness of the U.S.S.R. to do away with it, by reducing, not increasing the various components. Is this an indirect admission of the Soviet Union's preponderence in one or another sphere?

V. Makarevsky: Of course a certain disproportion does exist. That is why at the Vienna talks on the reduction of armaments and armed forces in Central Europe we have proposed that the U.S. forces be reduced by 13,000 men and ours by 20,000.

M. Milstein: Asymmetry does of course imply preponderance, but preponderance both on our side in some respects, and on the other side, in other respects.

The West has its own preconceived notions about the Soviet armed forces. First, it is said that they are numerically superior to the Western. Second, that we have more tanks. Third, that the U.S.S.R. has more tactical nuclear weapons. Fourth, that the U.S.S.R. has more room for manoeuvering of troops, reserves and combat units. Whether that is so is debatable. Some elements are counter-balanced, others are not. For instance, NATO has more anti-tank weapons. That is why it is proposed to hold meetings of experts, of the commanders of armed forces of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, their secretaries general and, lastly, highest ranking military leaders.

N.T.: But is there not a danger of getting bogged down in levels, sub-levels, comparisons, etc.? It will be extremely difficult to wade through this maze of problems.

M. Milstein: There is perhaps such a danger, when it comes to conventional armaments. If negotiations are conducted after the Vienna pattern we are bound to fall captive to statistics, juggling with figures and will not achieve any concrete results. In my view the only correct approach would be to use as a model the Soviet formula at the Geneva nuclear and space talks. This proposal - which has been accepted by the Americans - is very simple: to cut strategic nuclear armaments by half. The problem has to be solved en bloc, as the Warsaw Treaty states suggested in June 1986, not allowing ourselves to be caught in a quagmire of statistical wrangling from which it is sometimes simply impossible to extricate oneself. That would really be a new approach, an example of new thinking.

N.T.: What is the reaction abroad to the Soviet proposals? We know that you have recently been in the U.S. and in Austria and met with Western military men. What was discussed at these talks, what results have such discussions yielded?

M. Milstein: The meeting of Soviet and American retired generals and admirals

DIFFERENCES IN EVALUATIONS OF THE BALANCE OF WTO AND NATO ARMED FORCES AND CONVENTIONAL ARMAMENTS IN EUROPE

	WTO data			NATO data			U.S. Defence Dept. data			Data of London International Institute for Strategic Studies		
	WTO	NATO	WTO-NATO ratio	WTO	NATO	WTO-NATO ratio	WTO	NATO	WTO-NATO ratio	WTO	NATO[a]	WTO-NATO ratio
Combat-ready divisions	78	94[b]	1:1.2[f]	115[c]	88	1:0.8	113[c,d]	90[d]	1:0.8	90[c]	38	1:0.4
Tanks	>30,000	30,000[e]	f	26,900	13,470	1:0.5	32,000[g]	19,600[g]	1:0.6	46,610[h]	20,314	1:0.4
Tactical aircraft			1:1.2[i]	2,250[g]	1,960[g]	1:0.9	2,300[i]	3,450[i]	1:1.5	2,380[j]	2,426[j]	1:1

a) Exclusive of Spanish forces.
b) Including divisions of France and Spain, and also 60 combat-ready separate brigades.
c) Including divisions in military districts in the European part of the U.S.S.R.
d) Equivalents in divisions.
e) The figure for NATO includes French and Spanish tanks, as well as American and West European tanks in storage in Western Europe.
f) The WTO has a certain advantage in armoured forces.
g) Tanks of basic types in combat units and formations.
h) Including tanks in military districts in the European part of the U.S.S.R. as well as in the Transcaucasian Military District.
i) Fighter bombers and assault planes.
j) Fighter bombers exclusively.

Table from the yearbook "Disarmament and Security. 1986" published by the Institute of World Economics and International Relations, Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. Moscow, 1987.

was the first of its kind ever held. Seven of us went to the United States and met with nine American retired admirals and generals. On the agenda were the limitation of armaments and the military policy of the Reagan Administration. The Soviet delegation outlined and substantiated the latest Soviet initiatives. On the whole our proposals met with wide support among the American participants, with the exception of the proposal for the total elimination of nuclear weapons of which I have already spoken.

V. Makarevsky: Let me add that the atmosphere at the meeting was friendly. The discussions were held in public. With us was an official from the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Defence, General B.T. Surikov. The Pentagon, regrettably, did not send its own general to the meeting.

E. Nozhin: I should like to make some remarks about the general significance of our trip. The emergence of such groups as ours and similar groups in the United States and Western Europe is in my view a manifestation of the new political and military thinking which is now gaining momentum. When, say, doctors, writers, art workers speak up for peace that is logical. But when generals, men whose profession is war, begin to fight for peace, this looks somewhat paradoxical. But therein lies the strength of our group. The public evinces the keenest interest in our activity. It is noteworthy that our discussions in America drew a great many newsmen. And that is very important. I believe the public discussions exerted a considerable influence on public opinion through the mass media and the direct contacts we had with people. I personally had occasion to appear together with the American Admiral Eugene Carroll in a direct one-hour radio broadcast. Questions were put directly by the audience.

I made a live television appearance also in Shreveport, Louisiana, a town in the deep south. I assure you that our whole trip evoked great interest and was very useful.

N.T.: What about the meeting of retired admirals and generals held in Vienna in early May? You took part in it, did you not, Admiral Astafyev?

A. Astafyev: That was the fourth meeting of its kind. This time there were eight generals from five NATO countries and eleven generals and admirals from the Warsaw Treaty states.

We had agreed in advance that there would be no reports or papers prepared beforehand. We would simply conduct the discussion with a view to working out concrete recommendations that could be used in future. What specifically did we discuss? The general theme was the new military thinking in the nuclear age. I must admit that before the meeting we were not sure how our Western colleagues would react to the idea of doing away with nuclear weapons altogether. Margaret Thatcher and Jacques Chirac had been in Moscow shortly before and both had been emphatically in favour of retaining the "nuclear deterrent."

But to the credit of the Western generals be it said that none of them supported that concept. Moreover, the British General Harbottle regretted that his Prime Minister had been so openly insistent in her advocacy of "nuclear deterrence."

We also discussed the military aspects of the international security system. Clearly many questions still remain unanswered. We agreed to examine this problem in greater detail at our next meeting in May next year.

N.T.: You said that you worked out recommendations for future work. Exactly what recommendations?

A. Astafyev: One of them related to direct contacts between the NATO and Warsaw Treaty commanders-in-chief, and between the secretaries-general of the two organizations, and the setting up of working groups to study military-strategic concepts in the nuclear age which could serve to reduce tension. We proposed holding seminars, discussions, and exchanges between the military organizations and institutions of both blocs at different levels. Also discussed were confidence-building measures to supplement those worked out at the first stage of the Stockholm conference.

I should like to stress that we declared unanimously for ending the Vienna talks and going over to a new basis in accordance with the mandate of the second stage of the Stockholm conference now being examined at the meeting in the Austrian capital.

N.T.: We thank you for your participation in our Round Table and hope that you will cooperate with us in the future as well.

The Round Table was conducted by A. LEBEDEV, D. POGORZHELSKY and N. ZHOLKVER

A number of firms jointly owned by socialist countries have recently been set up: the Soviet-Bulgarian factory producing automobile electronic systems, Paesk, the Soviet-Hungarian producers of medical equipment Micromed, and others. It is no secret that many of them are encountering difficulties in the initial stages due to lack of experience in resolving organizational problems. Yet they are not trail-blazers, as it is twelve years since the first such joint venture was founded - Domochim, an international economic association for cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and the G.D.R. in the production of household chemicals, paints and varnishes. This article examines its experience and the problems it has come up against.

Chemicals for everyday uses

I can just imagine the face of a housewife, D.I.Y. enthusiast or car owner on seeing this display! That was the first thing that flashed through my mind when I looked at the wide range of household chemicals and paints at the Domochim's Moscow office. There was everything one could wish for - liquid and powder detergents, a variety of polishes for shoes, furniture and floors, cleaning agents for ovens, sinks and baths, as well as stain, rust and kettle-scale removers. Then there is a variety of varnishes, paints, drying oils and primers for walls, ceilings, garages and cars. Everything comes in cheerful boxes, tins or aerosol vapourisers with one thing in common: the trademark in the form of a circle with the word Domochim in Russian and German. This means they were made at factories owned by the company in the Soviet Union and the G.D.R.

And what do customers see in the shops? To answer that question I had to make my way from Smolensk Square to Marshal Rybalko Street. There, in the northwest of the capital, is the Moscow shop that specializes in Domochim's products.

Together with the shop's acting director, Galina Piterskaya, we made a tour of the counters and stands, looking for the familiar trademark among the variety of goods on sale. It wasn't our lucky day - we found only a few. Perhaps this was because there is a great demand for them?

"True," Galina Piterskaya told me. "Domochim goods sell out very quickly.

"The demand for these goods is so great that the Moscow wholesale organization dealing in household appliances often sends them not to the special Domochim shop, which has no sales problems, but to other shops where the turnover is slow."

In the past, contracts with the producers for direct deliveries helped considerably to expand the variety of Domochim goods. They were despatched straight from the factories in Brest, Kazan, Novosibirsk and other Soviet cities. This year, for some reasons this practice was broken. The limited range of goods available and difficulties in fulfilling plans have probably brought home the advantage of direct contracts to the shops' managers better than anything else could have done.

The directors of Domochim intend to take several Moscow shops selling household chemicals under their wing. They are also considering a narrow specialization for Domochim shops — for instance the Moscow shop would specialize in chemical products for cars. New Domochim shops would be opened in Tashkent and Yerevan, and subsequently in the capitals of other Soviet republics.

The Domochim's specialty store is doing brisk trade.

Photo by V. Panov

Under a single trademark

The shop on Marshal Rybalko Street, like its counterpart, Universal in Berlin, could be called Domochim's show case. Their difficulties to some extent reflect the difficulties of the association itself. It was these problems, ways of solving them and future prospects that we discussed at length with the staff of the Domochim's Moscow office.

"The government agreement setting up the joint enterprise was signed back in 1974," the director of the office Vladimir Potapov recalled. "Today 84-85 per cent of the demand for household chemicals in the Soviet Union is met, and in the G.D.R., almost 100 per cent."

Who is involved in the work of the enterprise and how is it managed? On the Soviet side the partners are the production associations Soyuzbytkhim and Soyuzkraska. On the G.D.R. side three big industrial associations are involved: the chemical plant in Bitterfeld, paint and varnish factories, and cosmetic factories in Berlin. All in all, this embraces 65 factories and 11 scientific research organizations employing about 100,000 people. The basic assets come to about 2,000 million rubles from each side.

The association is managed by a board made up of representatives of the two sides. It meets not less than once a year. Interim working sessions are held when the need arises. All day-to-day problems are settled by the Domochim office in Moscow, a permanent institution. It has

Perez de Cuellar in the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union and the United Nations have ample opportunities for cooperation in the interests of universal peace and security. This was once again borne out by the friendly conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and U.N. Secretary General Perez de Cuellar in the Kremlin on June 29. Mikhail Gorbachev noted the Soviet Union's continued respect for the work of the United Nations and described speculation to the effect that the organization's prestige is declining as "absolutely unacceptable."

Perez de Cuellar presented the International Year of Peace medal to President Andrei Gromyko, who headed the commission for holding the Year of the United Nations and the International Year of Peace in the Soviet Union. The U.N. Secretary-General spoke with Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. The distinguished guest also visited Minsk and Kiev. At Moscow University he was awarded an honorary doctorate. During his visit Perez de Cuellar repeatedly met with representatives of the Soviet public.

Perez de Cuellar in the Moscow studio of the artist Zurab Tsereteli.

Photo by K. Kokoshkin

a staff of ten experts from each country involved.

"A distinctive feature of our products," said Vlaidimir Potapov, "is that for the first time in CMEA practice they are produced in the two countries on the basis of joint scientific and technical research, according to a simple technology, from similar raw materials, and marketed under one trademark. At international trade fairs Domochim products are entered as the joint output of two countries. At present 84 types of product carry the enterprise's trademark.

"Take, for instance, this air freshener, Toilex," said one of the experts, Evgeny Sobolkov. "A few years ago production of this aerosol was begun simultaneously in the Soviet Union and the G.D.R. Since the demand for it in the G.D.R. was much less than that here, Soviet factories 'monopolized' production of it for the market of both countries. The facilities thus released at the Berlin factory Aerosol-Automat were put to use for the poroduction of other goods in which both countries are interested. Now take another product - Sanfor, for cleaning sinks," he went on. "It is produced by factories in both countries using the same technology."

The high quality of Domochim's products is borne out by the numerous prizes they have won at international exhibitions and fairs in Moscow, Leipzig and Bratislava. At the specialized international chemical fair in Bratislava alone, they won 12 gold medals.

Lessons and prospects

In the 12 years of its existence the association has not achieved all it hoped to. For example, it has not succeeded in arranging effective joint planning, particularly in some fields of scientific research. The same applies to capital construction. Often plans were submitted for the other side's consideration fully prepared, which naturally complicated coordination and led to unnecessary duplication. The implementation of scientific and technical projects, technological and production plans was hindered by a proliferation of documents and the need to obtain various signatures and authorizations.

"We in the G.D.R.," put in Volkmar Becker, who holds an MSc in chemistry, "also feel that so far we have not been able to achieve a wholly efficient division of labour. And, unfortunately, duplication often occurs in the development of new products. The guidelines for cooperation have to be drawn up very precisely. The restructuring in the Soviet Union, and the improvement in the G.D.R.'s economic performance will, undoubtedly, help to increase the effectiveness of our cooperation."

The office has drawn up a long-term comprehensive programme for development and individual plans for the work of separate production facilities for the period of up to 1990. This includes the Soviet proposal for a joint enterprise for the production of basic materials for household chemicals, which would meet the requirements of factories in both countries. The G.D.R., for its part, has suggested setting up temporary scientific and technical groups to deal with concrete problems, for instance, developing new basic materials for specific production purposes. By bringing in experts from different fields, the temporary groups could bring their new developments up to the production stage. The setting up of the association's own council of experts is also being considered. Such a council would help avoid unnecessary or duplicated work by giving advance consideration to technological problems and deciding on the feasibility of work in one field or another.

At CMEA's latest session in Bucharest, as at its other economic forums, the need to develop direct scientific, technical and production ties was stressed. Domochim is taking the first steps in this direction.

My last question was addressed to the director of the Moscow office: "Have representatives of the new and recently established joint ventures of the socialist countries turned to Domochim for guidance?"

"Of course," replied Vladimir Potapov, "and fairly often. For instance, staff members of the Soviet-Bulgarian machine-tool association have enquired how organizational problems are resolved in practice. To be fair, Domochim, although it has acquired a good deal of experience, has no qualms about turning to its colleagues for advice. That is why we are all for the idea of a special body being set up under CMEA's auspices to study methods of work and the organization of the scientific, technical and production activities of joint enterprises."

Domochim has set an example for the new joint enterprises and associations of the socialist countries. But its status and potential will have to be increased. Evidently the time for such associations has come. And they must advance to new heights of achievement.

NIKITA KUKUSHKIN

Fruit and vegetables grown in the Sahara

The deeper we travelled into the desert, gathering speed along the arrow-straight trans-Sahara highway, the greater our surprise. The vast Sahara desert, an endless desolate expanse, turned out to be far from barren. It is inhabited. The people who live there grow and harvest cereals and fruit. Every so often green oases appeared amidst the sand dunes and rocky plateaux. Moisture collects in the lowlands in winter, and farmers manage to grow and bring in the crops before the earth is scorched by the sun's rays. Seemingly shallow wells are visible in the sand dunes. Often water turns out to be close at hand, a mere three yards away. But this is certainly not always the case.

The Ghardaia oasis

We were heading for the town of Ghardaia in the Mzab Valley, deep in the Sahara desert. We drove through an area of unrelieved monotony. Then the road turned, sloped downwards and a vast green massif suddenly appeared where, they say, there are 200 thousand date palms. Dates are described as "the bread of the desert." It is not easy to grow a date palm. However paradoxical it may seem, fellahin constantly have to drain date groves, for the superabundant subsoil water kills the palm trees. The result of this toil is there for all to see. Some 50 of the 96 varieties that exist anywhere in the world grow in the area.

"The population of Ghardaia is over 70 thousand," said Madaci Amor, a wilaya official. "We hope Ghardaia will grow into a large city. Plants manufacturing metal piping and tar, a gas filling station, and a number of building firms and local industries operate in the industrial zone on the outskirts of the town. A cement plant is under construction."

We walked into a smallish market square edged with rows of shops and arcades. In their shade traders and customers find shelter from the heat. The shops display a variety of fruit grown in the Sahara. There is an abundance of dates, oranges, lemons, almonds, fresh vegetables, among them carrots of amazing size, weighing two or three kilograms each. Stuffed giant lizards and, of course, desert roses, crystalline flower-like formations are on view as an attraction for tourists.

It turns out that dealers from Algiers on the Mediterranean coast come to Ghardaia deep in the desert for fruit and vegetables.

Reasons for developing the desert

We met Selmi Abderrahman near his plot of land. There are many such plots forming a green patchwork around the town of Ghardaia. The yellow desert starts just beyond the palm branch fences.

"I have been working the plot for only a year," Selmi said. "I had no land before that. I decided to try my luck, and dug several wells, for the water is close to the surface. And I harvested the first crops of barley, onions, beets and other vegetables. The profits were enough effectively to allow me repay my loan from the Algerian agriculture and rural developoment bank."

We inspected Selmi Abderrahman's plot. It was difficult to believe that it had taken him only a year to cultivate the barren sands. Madaci Amor told us that in granting aid the state gives preference to those fallahin who start developing the desert. They are given credits on easy terms, are exempt from taxation in the first years, and are sold farm machinery on an instalment plan.

The Algerian government is placing emphasis on the development of the desert, rocky plateaux and savannas. The reason for this is that in the years since independence the arable area, far from growing, has diminished. Algeria, a large exporter of farm produce in the past, has been buying it since 1973. By the early eighties nearly 30 per cent of the country's cash receipts was being spent on food imports. There were both objective and subjective reasons for this. For instance, industrial enterprises and housing estates were built extensively on fertile land. Roads were laid out. Then the error of this was realized, and the law rigidly controlling the allocation of land for all kinds of construction was adopted. But there is also an objective factor, the natural phenomenon of the advance of the desert. Scientists have estimated that an area of 40 thousand hectares returns to the desert every year. So it has been decided to check the encroachment of the sands by cultivating desert areas. The development of the Sahara has proved to be a promising undertaking that will help solve the problem of supplying Algeria's rapidly growing population with food. When independence was declared in 1962, the country's population was nine million. It is now 23 million.

The market place in Ghardaia: a Saharan oasis thriving on subsoil waters
ADN-TASS photo

"A priority of the National Liberation Front (FLN) is to make Algeria self-sufficient in food," said Smail Oulebsir, an executive at Algeria's Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. "It is intended to make agriculture one of the key branches of the economy. The living standards of our population have improved considerably over the 25 years since independence, which was proclaimed on July 5, 1962, as a result of the protracted heroic struggle of the people. Requirements have risen, too. We do not want to spend hard currency on food any more. Algerian land can provide enough food for our people. We now place the emphasis on increasing labour productivity and raising a harvest from every hectare of land."

The Algerians' optimism is justified. The implementation of the programme for agricultural development begun in 1984 has already yielded positive results. A record grain crop, 3 million tons, was harvested in 1985. Agrarian output increased by 25 per cent that year. This enabled Algeria to stop importing barley, eggs and honey. The prospect of exporting potatoes and early vegetables to Europe and other African countries has become a realistic one.

This progress has also manifested itself in the self-governing socialist agricultural economic units instituted in Algeria. There are some 3,400 of them. Only 300 such units operated at a profit in the 1983-84 fiscal year. As many as 1,200 were profitable in the 1985-86 fiscal year. And from 2,000 to 2,500 are expected to show considerable profits this season.

We visited one such farm in the Tipasa coastal district. Its name is Farhat, which means "joy." 70 people work at the farm, which has invariably shown a profit since its formation in 1963. All the workers have been provided with free housing by the state. Their average earnings are 2,400 dinars per month (100 dinars amount to 14 rubles). And at the end of the year they receive a lump sum of 30-40 thousand dinars, depending on the volume of work done and the end results of the work. The workers elect the managerial board and its chairman, who supervise the work of the enterprise.

Such farms are not yet numerous in Algeria, but they set a good example. The private sector still predominates in agriculture, where over a million people are empoloyed. It accounts for about 70 per cent of farm produce and controls the market. Much therefore remains to be done to develop the agrarian sector of the economy, and spread the experience of the most successful farms before Algeria is self-sufficient in food and resumes the export of the fruits of its land.

EVGENY BOBROV
our own correspondent

Algeria

MOZAMBIQUE

A long and hard way to go

The town of Chai is situated on the bank of the Ruvuma River, which serves as the boundary between Mozambique and Tanzania. In September 1964 a Portuguese military post in Chai was attacked by fighters of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), formed two years earlier on June 25, 1962. Thus began the armed anticolonial struggle of the Mozambican people. The flag of the newly independent state, the People's Republic of Mozambique (PRM), was raised on June 25, 1975.

Its enemies predicted that the new state would not exist for long. The mass exodus of Portuguese did considerable damage to the Mozambican economy. Moreover, when leaving Mozambique the colonialists destroyed equipment and farm machinery, and herded cattle over the border into the Republic of South Africa. Mozambique had hardly any qualified specialists of its own. 90 per cent of its population was illiterate. Because of disease and malnutrition, half the children in the country died before the age of five.

Prompt measures were needed to eradicate the effects of such a grim legacy. And such measures were taken by the Mozambique Liberation Front, transformed into the FRELIMO Party, the vanguard of the working people. By the early eighties the republic had achieved considerable progress. The gross national product had increased and living standards improved. Medical services, education, and welfare had been made accessible to the people.

The aim of the enemies of the Mozambican revolution was to prevent this. Gangs calling themselves the "Mozambique National Resistance" (MNR) were formed with the help of funds provided by the South African racists and their Western patrons. These gangs raid agricultural and industrial enterprises, schools and hospitals, and terrorize the population. Subsequent official figures show that the damage caused to the country by bandits runs to 5,000 million dollars, and that the toll in lives reached 100 thousand. The situation was aggravated by the fact that prolongued drought had lead to famine in a number of provinces.

Trying to provoke panic in the country and plunge it into chaos, the enemies of the Republic engineered the crash of a plane carrying Samora Moisés Machel. It came down on October 19, 1986, and the Chairman of the FRELIMO Party, the first President of the People's Republic of Mozambique, was killed. The new leader of the Party and President Joaquim Alberto Chissano, has confirmed the continuity of the course of the Mozambican leadership towards the construction of a new society. A programme for routing the MNR bands and ensuring economic development has been drawn up. Joaquim Chissano has stressed in one of his speeches that relations with the Soviet Union, cemented by the Soviet-Mozambican treaty of friendship and cooperation, are of decisive importance for the implementation of that programme. The Soviet Union helps Mozambique in building manufacturing plants, in geological prospecting and in restoring and constructing irrigation systems. Relations between the two countries have assumed a stable character, and this is particularly important as Mozambique is now living through a difficult period of struggle for the consolidation of its independence. Pretoria is continuing its subversive actions against the People's Republic of Mozambique.

In retaliation for this, the Mozambican army is dealing ever stronger blows at terrorists and saboteurs. Conducting joint operations with Zimbabwean and Tanzanian units, the Mozambican army has inflicted heavy casualties on the marauders in Zambézia, Sofala and Tete provinces in recent months. The bandits' attempts to split the country in two and entrench themselves north of the Zambezi river have been thwarted. The "Beira corridor," along which the railway and the highway linking Zimbabwe with the Mozambican port of Beira pass, have been protected against the incursions.

Nonetheless, the situation remains uneasy. On the eve of the 25th anniversary of the FRELIMO Party and the 12th anniversary of Mozambique's independence on June 25, the National Security Service revealed a far-flung conspiracy hatched by South Africa against the people of Mozambique, and called for greater vigilance. Addressing the thousands who had gathered for an anniversary meeting, President Chissano of the People's Republic of Mozambique and Chairman of the FRELIMO Party, said that, notwithstanding all its achievements, the nation still had a long and difficult path ahead to real progress. Attempts to stifle the revolution, he said, must come up against the still closer unity of the Mozambican people along with readiness to fight for the ideals of the FRELIMO Party.

ANATOLY ZHIGUNOV

Spain and NATO: background story

Anatoly KRASIKOV

Classified government documents shedding light on the prehistory of Spain's joining of the North Atlantic Treaty, of which it became a formal member on May 30, 1982, have been made public in the United States.

These documents immediately became hot news, and not just because the theme remains a delicate one to this day as many Spaniards are still opposed to Madrid's participation in the aggressive bloc. The declassified archives give an insight into Washington's secret diplomacy aimed at imposing on Spain limited sovereignty within the orbit of the United States.

Why Harry Truman was in a hurry

The treaty to create the North Atlantic alliance was signed by 12 Western powers in Washington on April 4, 1949. Spain was to have become its 13th member. But the governments of most West European countries were unable to agree to this as they had to consider the very hostile attitude of their peoples to Franco's fascist dictatorship.

In May 1950 the U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson met with the British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin and the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman to discuss the prospects for cooperation with Franco's Spain in various fields. The U.S. military command availed itself of the opportunity to present its views on the policy of the West in respect of Madrid. On the instructions of the U.S. Secretary of Defence, the Joint Chiefs of Staff submitted secret document No. 72 to the National Security Council on June 8, 1950.

It strongly recommended that **"the Department of State take action without delay to assure to the United States and its allies military accessibility to and military cooperation with Spain either bilaterally or through the acceptance of that nation as a signatory to the North Atlantic Treaty or Western Union Treaty."** The authors of the document also emphasized that they **"feel strongly that some way must be found to overcome the political objections of the United Kingdom and France to improvement of their relations with Spain."**

It follows from the declassified documents that differences had developed between the American diplomatic and military establishments. The diplomats, while on the whole sharing the strategic plans of the "hawks," advised against hurrying and giving the fruit time to ripen so as not to spoil relations with the West European allies. The military, on the contrary, demanded that there be "brushing all finesse aside" and demanded resolute action.

On February 1, 1951, the basic directions of U.S. policy in respect of Spain were placed on the agenda of a meeting of the National Security Council. The American military considered themselves the sole masters of NATO and did not conceal their disregard for its other members, as though they were satellites of the United States. That is why they cast aside all diplomatic niceties and bluntly stated: **"The Joint Chiefs of Staff feel that instead of discussing an immediate policy toward Spain...with the British and French Governments, the United States should, in the first instance, propose the acceptance of Spain as a member of NATO. In this connection, they would point out that although unanimous consent must be obtained in NATO before Spain can become a member, this consent will never be given unless the United States presses for the acceptance of Spain."**

This small sentence in a top-secret text intended for the eyes of a very limited number of persons sheds light on the nature of relations inside the Atlantic alliance. It also explains much in the subsequent history of international relations.

Document No. 72/4, the first to outline exhaustively Washington's policy of gradually drawing Spain into the U.S. military orbit, was adopted after a discussion at a meeting of the National Security Council which was presided over by President Harry Truman. Here are its main points:

"1. The immediate objectives of United States policy toward Spain should be:

a. To develop urgently the military potentialities of Spain's strategic geographic position...

b. To concentrate planning on the use of Spain for the common defence, not for the defence of the Iberian Peninsula...

c. To approach the Spanish Government in order to acquire such facilities as bases for long-range bomber and fighter operations and behind-the-lines staging areas. We should similarly approach the Spanish Government for bases for naval operations.

d. To provide military assistance to Spain insofar as this is consistent with the objectives set forth in paragraph 2 below.... We should release from the Defence Department through the CAA (Civil Air Agreement), either direct to the Spaniards or through the U.S. air lines operating in Spain, as much as possible of the air navigational aids and other electronic equipment...

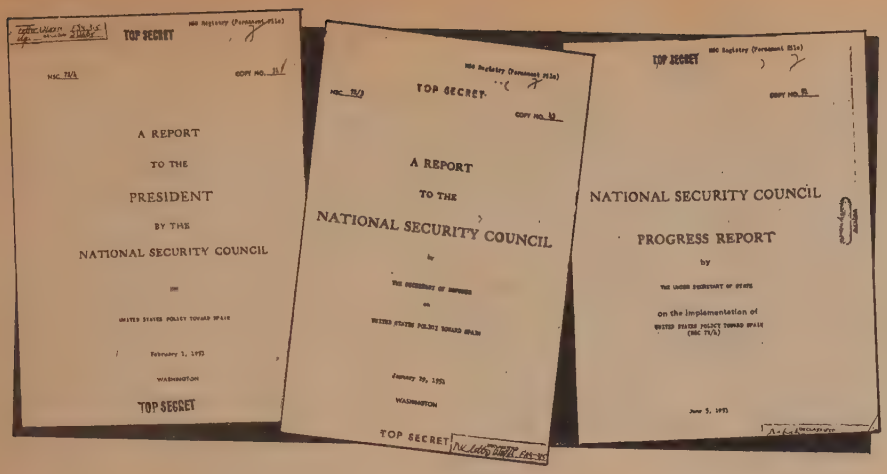
2. The ultimate objective of United States policy toward Spain should be:

a. To obtain early Spanish participation in the NAT (North Atlantic Treaty)...

b. To reach agreement within the NAT on Spanish participation.... Any MDAP (Mutual Defence Assistance Program) given to Spain should be given under such terms and conditions as to advance and not retard Spanish participation in NATO.... Aid should be given only if we are satisfied that by so doing we are advancing Spain closer to participation in NATO."

National Security Council document 72/4 clearly shows that not only the generals but also the political leadership of the United States could not care less about the opinions of their friends and allies. No matter how much the British and French objected, the drawing of Spain into NATO was proclaimed the "ultimate objective."

In pursuance of the NSC directives the U.S. ambassador to Madrid Stanton Griffis, was instructed to sound out General Franco on his attitude to Western Europe's military problems. Several days later, on February 12 and 13, 1951, the State



Some of the previously top secret documents declassified by the U.S. National Security Council.

Department informed London and Paris of the stand taken by the United States on the question of the possible use of Spain's military potential and strategic position.

Behind the backs of the allies

On getting this informationn from the State Department, the British and French governments stated their objections to the idea of talks with the Caudillo. How did Washington respond?

"When it became apparent that they would not agree to this step," an Undersecretary of State reported to the National Security Council, **"the Department decided action under NSC 72/4 should no longer be delayed and on March 7 Ambassador Griffis was authorized to initiate his exploratory talk with General Franco."**

Thereby the United States pointedly ignored the objections of its allies and initiated talks with Franco behind their backs. The American ambassador met with the Caudillo on March 14 and told him everything.

The Undersecretary of State wrote in his report to the National Security Council that **"Franco said he realized thoroughly our commitments under NATO and he understood that a unanimous invitation was necessary before a new member could be admitted into the North Atlantic Pact. He doubted whether such an invitation would be extended to Spain. Under present world conditions the best solution would be a direct agreement between the United States, Spain and Portugal. If the United States furnished adequate military assistance, Franco stated, Spain would be willing to enter into an agreement with the United States with exactly the same obligations as those contained in the NAT. Spain would thus be bound to all the NAT commitments including those relating to the initiation of hostilities against any NATO member by the U.S.S.R. Under any and all circumstances, Franco added, regardless of whether or not there were any pacts, if Spain were properly armed it would send troops to fight north of the Pyrenees."**

It further follows from the report that **"Franco assured Ambassador Griffis that any location in Spain or its possessions was at the immediate disposal of the United States for air, military or naval bases, provided that such bases were mutual and would revert to Spain upon the conclusion of the war."**

Franco agreed to go as far in military cooperation as the United States itself was prepared to go. But he demanded a respectful attitude to himself and a display of at least a semblance of equality.

On March 16, 1951 the State Department informed the British and French embassies in Washington that contact with the Caudillo had been established despite objections by London and Paris. But at the same time, as is now known from the declassified documents of the National Security Council, the United States concealed from its allies Franco's remarks about the setting up of American military bases in Spanish territory. The U.S. permanent representative in the NATO Council was instructed to inform the representatives of other member countries of Griffis' conversation with Franco but to omit the part concerning bases.

On June 27, 1951 the NSC sent yet another top secret document to the President of the United States. It was for the most part a repetition of the NSC statement of February 1, but it did contain new elements, in particular, the following important point:

"If full membership of Spain in NATO would be unacceptably delayed, to conclude alternative mutual security arrangements which would include Spain in the Western military set-up and which would not prejudice the attainment at the earliest practicable date of Spanish membership in NATO."

Economic relations with Spain were subordinated to the same aim. It was directly stated in the new document: **"Any military or economic assistance given to Spain should be given under such terms and conditions as to advance and not retard Spanish participation in NATO."**

The new text was finally approved as a document of "governmental policy" on June 28, 1951 and sent to a limited number of persons as NSC 72/6, superceding NSC 72/4.

Washington was impatient. In fact, it was so impatient that Harry Truman did not wait for the final edition of the NSC directives and ordered the U.S. ambassador in Madrid Griffis to inform the Spanish government of the wish of the United States to resume the discussion started with General Franco on March 14, 1951. The presidential order was carried out on June 25. Shortly afterwards Griffis received a written reply from the Caudillo: "the Spanish Government is in principle willing to start conversations of a defensive military character."

The United States' closest allies in NATO were still hoping to restrain Washington's eagerness. On June 29, 1951 the British government requested that the United States should not initiate discussions with Madrid until it had had an opportunity to express its views on the matter. The State Department promised to give the British request its "full consideration." But on July 6 the British embassy in Washington was informed that "due to the urgency of implementing our policy toward Spain the United States expected to proceed soon with a further exploratory approach to the Spanish Government."

On July 9 and 10 the French government officially asked the United States "to refrain from initiating direct action with the Spanish Government."

On July 10 London again protested against "the contemplated bilateral approach for military facilities" in Spain. And again it urged Washington that "this policy be reconsidered."

But Truman brushed aside the British and French as a troublesome nuisance. The new top secret report of the State Department to the National Security Council on September 7, 1951 stated:

"In consultation with the President, it was decided on July 11 that notwithstanding the British and French objections, Admiral Sherman should proceed to Spain for the purpose of conducting exploratory discussions of rights to stage (American) aircraft through Spanish fields, overfly

Spain, and generally make use of Spanish air facilities and anchorage rights for naval vessels."

On July 12, 1951 the United States replied to Britain and France that it would continue the discussion with the Franco government. And four days later, on July 16, Admiral Sherman and Ambassador Griffis met with Franco. The delegations (their composition was changed several times) began their work when the presidency in the United States was held by a Democrat, Harry Truman, and concluded it during a Republican administration headed by Dwight Eisenhower.

In circumvention of Congress

Both sides wanted an agreement. True, each wanted to extract the maximum profit for itself. The scale and nature of American assistance caused the most heated discussions. The Francoists insisted on aid on a regular basis and not as a single grant. They also wanted the problems of setting up American military bases in Spain and of working out aid programmes to be solved in parallel.

But there was a stumbling block - the U.S. government needed Congressional assent, but the Congressmen were far from ready to okay assistance to Spain over a period of several years. To sidestep this obstacle the White House decided to use the procedure of "discussion with the appropriate Congressional committees." In other words, to secure the consent of several Congressmen and effectively act in circumvention of Congress.

On July 9, 1953 the Secretary of State of the United States agreed with a group of leading Congressmen that the accords on the setting up of U.S. military bases in Spain would be formalized not in the form of a treaty subject to ratification by the U.S. Senate but as an "executive agreement" which does not need to be sanctioned by the legislators.

In the second half of August 1953 all the still outstanding issues were finally resolved and the American delegation was instructed to conclude the agreements. For Spain they were signed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Alberto Martin Artajo and for the United States, by the U.S. Ambassador in Madrid James Dunn. The ceremony was held in Madrid on Septembere 26, 1953. The United States obtained the right to set up a whole network of air fields and naval bases and use them for military purposes. It retains this right to this day.

An interesting detail leaps to the eye: under none of the agreements of 1953 does the United States commit itself to defending Spain in the event of war. But at the same time Spain became a sort of defending Spain in the event of war. But at the same time Spain became a sort of bridgehead for the Pentagon's militaristic plans.

In January 1954 the United States determined on the structure of its military presence in Spain. It was decided to station in Madrid the Joint U.S. Military Group (JUSMG) and the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG). In accordance with a secret instruction signed by the Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force General N.F. Twining, the Joint U.S. Military Group was instructed among other things to:

- review and coordinate the proposed construction program of the services concerned...in accordance with approved plans. This programme will then be broken up into individual service programmes and sponsored by the departments concerned through to approval.

insure that construction criteria and standards used in design conform to Department of Defence policies, and that contracts conform with Armed Services Procurement Regulations and intergovernmental agreements.

Instrument of interference

The extent to which Washington trusted its Spanish partners is eloquently illustrated by the fact that every member of the Joint U.S. Military Group and the Military Assistance Advisory Group was strictly forbidden to "assume any duty as a result of which he will be responsible to the Government of Spain" and also to give Spaniards "without sanction" any consultations of a strategic nature. On the other hand, they were instructed to engage in what amounted to espionage. A separate point in the directive said:

(although) "JUSMG is not an intelligence-gathering agency, however, military personnel assigned to JUSMG have the same responsibility as all other personnel in the Armed Forces for reporting information which affects, or might affect, the security and vital interests of the United States. The normal channel for reporting intelligence information will be through the United States Military, Naval, and Air Force Attachés in Spain."

The Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) was instructed among other things to furnish monthly reports to their superiors on the course of implementation of the programmes, the use and maintenance of equipment supplied by the United States, the training of personnel for the Spanish armed forces and on the way graduates of U.S. military educational establishments are employed.

The further metamorphoses in Madrid's position and their causes are interesting.

In December 1957 the government of the U.S.S.R. sent a note to the Spanish government. It read, "the U.S. military leaders in no way conceal that by setting up their bases on the territory of NATO member countries and of their other allies they would like to distance from the United States the front of a possible war and use foreign territories to absorb a retaliatory strike. In this light, is the risk to which the population of Spanish cities near foreign military bases would be exposed in the event of a new war unleashed by the NATO strategists justified?"

The Soviet warning had a sobering effect. Exchanging views with his relative, Franco admitted that he had made a mistake in consenting to the deployment of American military aircraft in Torrejon, at the gates to the capital. Judging from the minutes of the conversation made by his cousin General F. Franco Salgado-Araujo, the Caudillo stated virtually the following:

"When the lease of the base in Torrejon expires I think it expedient to move the U.S. Air Force installation further from Madrid, for instance to the province of Ciudad Real. We will be able to sigh with relief after moving the base further away. I agreed to the siting of the base (in Torrejon) when everybody thought that the Soviet Union did not possess powerful thermonuclear weapons. But today the situation appears to be totally different."

The dictator's belated "insight" does not absolve him of responsibility for the fact that it was during his rule that for the first time in its long history Spain found itself drawn into the military-political orbit of a foreign power. Never before had any Spanish government provided national territory for the permanent deployment of foreign troops. Not one of them had permitted such a crude flouting of the Spanish state's sovereignty.

Franco's death removed the objections of the United States' allies to Spain's membership of NATO and the old dream of the strategists in Washington came true when Calvo Sotelo's right-of-centre cabinet held office in Madrid.

Today Spain is a member of the political organization of the North Atlantic Treaty but does not participate in its military structure. Spain has acceded to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. The Socialist government headed by Felipe Gonzalez is pressing if not for the liquidation then at least for a scaling down of the American military presence on Spanish soil. And one of its prime demands is the dismantling of the U.S. air force base in Torrejon. After all, even Franco admitted that it was a mistake to set it up. But the talks with the leader from across the ocean are proceeding with great difficulty. So far six rounds of talks have ended in failure.

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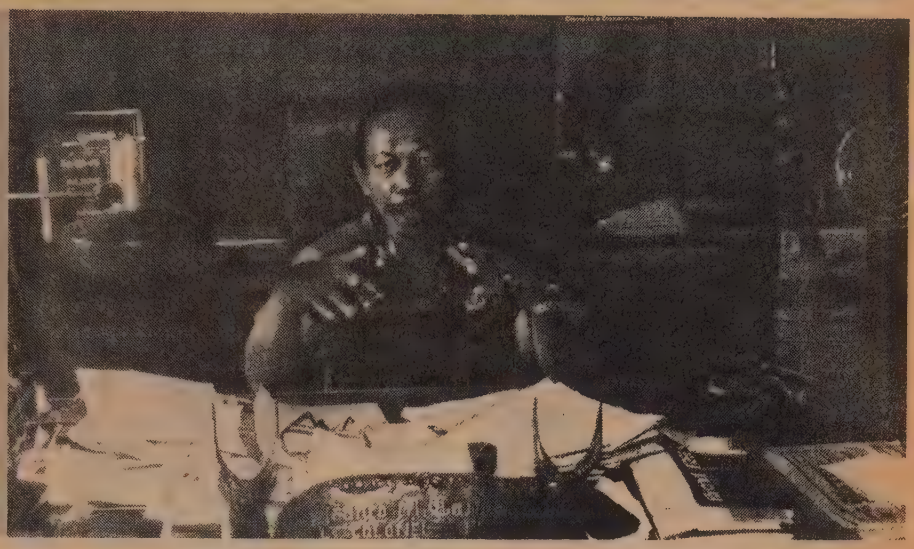
Who are the right-wing extremists in the Philippines? Are they strong enough to impose a new yoke on the country that has just sloughed off the Marcos dictatorship?



Lieutenant Colonel Franco Calida, "godfather" of the Alsa Masa terrorist group and a Rambo worshipper.

Lieutenant Colonel Calida, General Singlaub and plainclothes generals

LEONID KUZNETSOV

They marched through the streets brandishing a severed human head on a stick. Press photographers zoomed in on the horrifyingly impassive faces of members of the Philippine armed sect Alsa Masa, who had just quartered a New People's Army fighter during a clash in Davao Province. "We drink our enemies' blood," they told newsmen. "We have drunk his, too...."

Shortly before the right publicly exhibited the severed head of their victim, Lieutenant Colonel Franco Calida, chief of Davao city's police constabulary and the "godfather" of the Alsa Masa sect, spoke to newsmen. Calida told them he worshipped Hitler and the American movie actor Sylvester Stallone. The "godfather" orders his men to lay flags and weapons captured from the rebels in a pile under a picture of Stallone as Rambo. "He is my idol," he explains. "I also take a 0.45 pistol and a tommy gun wherever I go."

Lieutenant Colonel Calida believes groupings like Alsa Masa are indispensable as the main instrument for the suppression of communism. It is Calida's firm conviction that "all people are divided into communists and anti-communists. There are no other alternatives." Asked whom he regarded as Communists, he replied: "All those who refuse to join Alsa Masa."

This admirer of Hitler has his Goebbels: Jun Pala, a commentator at the Davao radio station. It is a hard and fast rule with Jun to prevent left-wing journalists being heard. As he sets off on his punitive expeditions, Calida ties a red bow - a charm against bullets - around the barrel of his tommy gun; as for the commentator, he has surrounded the radio station with sandbag-padded breastworks, and posted his bodyguards behind them. While making public speeches Jun occasionally cocks his pistol into the microphone, especially when urging his audience to "crack Communists' skulls open."

Posing as a strong personality, Pala often says that in his propaganda he draws upon "Hitler's experience in brainwashing." "My style of anti-communist propaganda," he says, "is a carbon copy of that used by the nazi leader and his famous chief propagandist Goebbels." The threat to make short work of all who refuse to join Alsa Masa is "the only language the Communists understand," Pala remarks, and adds: "While Communists enjoy reading Marx, I enjoy reading Hitler."

Alsa Masa and other paramilitary organizations of religious fanatics are known in the Philippines as "the right-wing forces' odd-jobbers."

The Association of Philippine Broadcasters has voiced its indignation over Jun's fascist broadcasts from Davao and threatened him with dismissal. Nevertheless, he continues to cock his pistol over the air. Local papers explain that Jun and his ilk get away with this because the top-ranking Philippine military regard Davao as a "theatre of war" against the rebels where anything goes. This viewpoint is said to be shared by Fidel Ramos, chief of the General Staff, among others.

Consequently, the leaders of the dark forces have the tacit support of certain highly placed figures in the present administration. And not only theirs, for that matter. A poster in front of Alsa Masa's

Davao checkpoint, where every passing driver must declare the destination and purpose of his trip, shows a picture of Jesus Christ with the words, "kill for peace, kill for democracy," daubed on it in tar. One of the men on duty wore a strikingly familiar uniform. Where had he got it from? A U.S. base, perhaps?

"That's right," the Alsa Masa man replied.

Major General John Singlaub (Ret.), leader of the U.S. anti-communists, visited the Philippines recently. What was his mission this time?

A shortish man of a perfectly ordinary appearance and the discreet manner of a waiter or a private soldier ("Yes, sir....Correct, sir....Beg your pardon, sir...."), he turns out to be, at a close inspection, a tough character with piercing eyes and a perpetual smirk on his thin dry lips. Asked whether he suffered from an inferiority complex, realizing that his dwarfish height (165 cm) was implied, he said coolly: "All dictators were short." Indeed, he somewhat resembles Mussolini, but to me his strong build, swift and forceful gestures and even his face (minus the scar, of course) make him more like Otto Skorzeny. I saw Otto Skorzeny in Egypt where he had arrived in the guise of businessman to restore the former nazi spy network and muster Arab reactionary forces with a view to overthrowing President Nasser. Now what was the purpose of General John Singlaub - "the CIA's roving ambassador" and almost the spitting image of Skorzeny - in visiting the Philippines? He clumsily explained his interest in the archipelago by the treasures of the Japanese General Yamashita allegedly hidden there. But he had other motives besides....

During the February 1986 events, mass protest against the Marcos dictatorship and the support of the church and the military brought to power Corazon Aquino, a representative of the Philippine elite. Manila and Washington reckoned that this way they would defuse the situation in the country. It wasn't long, however, before the White House, the Pentagon and the CIA had second thoughts about it. The Filipinos started displaying discontent with their dependence on the Pentagon, and being at the U.S. military-industrial complex's beck and call.

Ex-"housewife" Aquino did not live up to Washington's expectations as President. All her actions, especially the early ones, were regarded by Washington as concessions to the left. Aquino's striving for national reconciliation and her desire to pursue a "golden mean" policy riled the White House. It expressed concern that after the February 1986 events patriotic and nationalist forces had begun to make active use of the "democratic space." These forces could be opposed only by a united right-wing reactionary front. However, Marcos' flight left the reactionaries leaderless.

So John Singlaub's real mission was to rally the extreme right into a mailed fist. After he had made his appearance in Manila, Hilarion Henares, an Inquirer observer, warned that Singlaub was trying to swing the political situation in the Philippines to the right and to provoke a right-wing putsch against the Aquino government.

Jun Pala, the Goebbels of Philippine anti-communists, is airing his views unhindered.

The "treasure hunter" visited the islands of Negros, Cebu, Mindanao and other trouble spots, meeting with timber merchants, businessmen, sugar plantation owners and the military. In Manila, he had talks with ministers, prominent politicians, top-ranking army officers, the Chief of the General Staff Fidel Ramos, ex-Secretary of National Defence Juan Enrile, and members of the President's retinue.

John Singlaub and U.S. agents succeeded, to a certain extent, in doing what observer Henares had warned they would try to do. As a matter of fact, Washington has powerful allies on the Philippine archipelago with whom Lieutenant Colonel Calida, a mere pawn, stands no comparison. After all, he is only an aide-de-camp to their excellencies the plainclothes generals.

Extremists like Lieutenant Colonel Calida have the support of the elite that is accustomed to lording it over the country.

The Philippine elite is an extraordinary phenomenon. Its nucleus took shape in Spanish colonialist days and assumed new features under American conquerors. During the Japanese occupation, representatives of many aristocratic families willingly served in the imperial army and, later, as readily resumed cooperation with their former American masters. Since then, the nature of "high society" has not on the whole changed. "The Philipine elite," the newspaper Manila Times points out, "retains all of its vices and has not acquired any of the new virtues - they remain colonial luxury-loving, tied to the land and profoundly conservative. Their wealth is frozen in the old business of distilleries, real estate, plantations and retailing. That leaves to foreigners the processing, manufacture, and extraction of our natural wealth."

The paper means the extreme right-wing flank of the Philippine elite, which is now increasingly frequently showing its teeth.

In the small town of Pulilan, regular festivals are held in honour of the hard-working carabao (the Philippine buffalo), for which local peasants have great affection. Some carabaos have their sides partly shaved, with the remaining hair forming pictures or catch phrases. Bedecked with ribbons, the buffalos stalk along the streets, and the owner of every "shaven" buffalo is entitled to a prize. But on the occasion when I was there, something went wrong. As required by tradition, a buffalo crawled up to the jury on its knees, but the phrase on its sides, "agrarian reform is needed," threw the judges into confusion. We journalists asked them why the carabao had been denied a prize, and the simple reply was: "The festival has been financed by big landowners who are not a bad lot but who are against reform."

The President's plans for the solution of the most acute problem modern Philippine society is faced with has come up against immediate and vigorous opposition from the right. Big landowners are reported to be taking up arms - merely out of bravado, no doubt. The landowners have never done their own fighting; instead, they have traditionally formed the so-called "private armies" or, to put it simply, bands of mercenaries who have defended their estates, drowning poor peasants' revolts in blood. They have conducted a series of symposia, conferences and seminars on anti-communism. Antonio Abaya, a local propaganda ace, has published a series of articles in the bourgeois newspaper Business Day meant to prove that socialism is losing to capitalism. There have appeared dozens of reviews, written on a popular level, intended to impress it on the people that any social transformations, let alone a land reform in the country, are unnecessary and even harmful.

The right are becoming more active in the armed forces as well. The ground forces, the navy and the air force still boast a Guardian Brotherhood military organization which, though formally banned, has an estimated membership of 65,000 or even 100,000 - a third of the Philippine armed forces' total numerical strength. Its

ideology is rabid anti-communism, and its programme (as far as agrarian reform is concerned) is to preserve the big estates and a status quo that goes back to colonialist times. This section of the military is particularly intolerant of the rebel movement, and demands that all who deliberately or unwittingly help the opponents of the reactionaries should be summarily dealt with.

The right-wing elite - both military and civilian - have called on extremist bands to take combat action. The military hand over weapons and ammunition to groupings like Alsa Masa. The big capitalists shell out. Having failed at the parliamentary elections, the opposition's candidates for the Senate organized a series of demonstrations against the Aquino administration. Their purpose was to build up tension in the country and compel the President to declare the election results invalid.

Here is how one such demonstration went. A crowd marched through the streets carrying grotesquely derisive effigies of the President, Vice-President Salvador Laurel and Cardinal Jaime Sin, and finally burned them.... A bus swerved to one side, screeching to a halt, then another....Their tyres had been punctured in order to block the streets and throw the city traffic into confusion.... A huge crowd held up black coffins with the word "Democracy" on them. They were mockup coffins, but real ones with victims of the right-wing extremists in them, are more and more in evidence. For the most part, terrorist acts are committed by gangs of mercenaries, including Alsa Masa, whose delegates I saw at a meeting of the right in Manila, in front of the residences of the Secretary of Defence and the Chief of the General Staff.

The dense groups of young men carrying Alsa Masa slogans stood out in the crowd. The right-wing leaders had probably expected the meeting to spark off a rebellion, in which case they wouldn't be able to do without Alsa Masa.

"Aye, we're ready," a thug confirmed my guess.

Opposition to the policy of national unity, reform, and the consolidation of national independence and sovereignty finds its expression in the foreign policy sphere as well.

The interest in the Soviet Union and its peace initiatives grew sharply in the country, especially after Mikhail Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech in the summer of 1986.

The right vigorously fight these trends. They interfere with the development of the Philippines' relations with socialist countries in every way. They organize marches, demanding, for instance, that the construction of a residential building for the personnel of the Soviet trade mission in Manila be stopped on the grounds that it will be "a seat of espionage" and that the Russians "are digging tunnels to vital installations and military institutions."

The American lawyer Gerald Horne has toured the Philippines, sticking rather closely to Singlaub's itinerary. While in Manila, Gerald Horne gave an interview to a New Times correspondent.

What, in your opinion, is the population's attitude to the extreme right-wing gangs?

I saw people abandoning their homes lest the extremists should grab them. Groups of fanatics multiply fast. They have created a refugee problem and worsened the human rights situation in the country. The gangs are formed exactly in line with the doctrine of "low-intensity conflict" worked out in the U.S. Their activity is accompanied by a frenzied anti-communist campaign. From America they are supported by organizations like Causa International - a political cat's paw of the Moonie sect headed by Moon, a South Korean. Moon and other Causa International leaders have close ties with the South Korean intelligence service (which, in turn, coordinates its actions with the CIA. - L.K.). Consider this, for instance. Moon owns the newspaper The Washington Times - a propaganda mouthpiece of U.S. rightwingers. In the Philippines, The Washington Times correspondent Leo Enriquez is a Moon's man who maintains close links with local extremist leaders.

How would you comment on Washington's attempts to influence the political process in the country through the extreme right?

In Davao, Lieutenant Colonel Calida, the "godfather" of Alsa Masa, does not do anything without first consulting Bell Parker, the U.S. Information Service's official representative in the Philippines. The U.S. Consulate in Cebu compels college students to form "anti-communist groups." The Consulate distributes, for instance, videotaped copies of the anti-Soviet film "Amerika." The idea is, to my mind, to have the Aquino government exterminate its enemies, in which case the nation will swing to the left. The authorities will certainly prove incapable of dealing with such socio-economic problems as poverty in the countryside and agrarian reform....At a certain point, the military will say: "Aha, the civilian government has a weakness for Communists." This will provide a pretext for overthrowing the civilian government and replacing it with a military junta. The Reagan administration is conducting a double-faced policy. It embraces the Aquino government with one hand, and aims a pistol at it with the other. By the "pistol" I mean the U.S. administration's close links with the Philippine military and all kinds of armed sects like Alsa Masa, which are all set for a putch. ■

An Alsa Masa checkpoint. The Philippine Presidential Human Rights Committee has evidence that the gunmen manning such checkpoints often commit murders, rapes and extortions.
Photos from Asiaweek (Hong Kong)

General Fidel Ramos, Chief of Staff of the Philippine Army, looking down on Davao through a helicopter window. One wonders what General Singlaub has seen him about.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

1917–1987

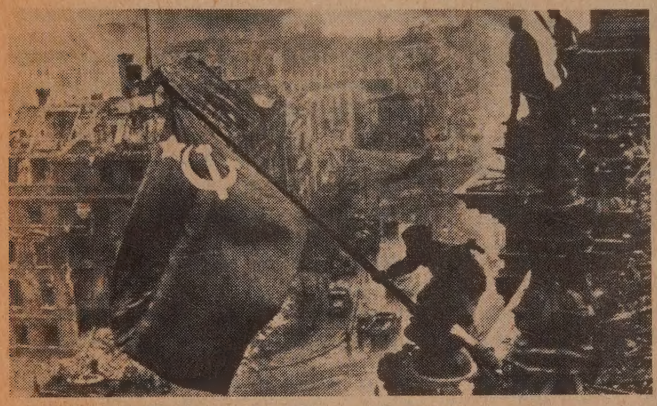
Dear readers!

The Editors of New Times invite you to take part in a quiz on the subject of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The quiz contains seven questions. You can send in your answers as soon as you are ready to do so, but they should arrive in Moscow not later than October 15.

The two top prizes are visits to the Soviet Union sponsored by our magazine. They will take in Moscow and a union republic chosen by the individual winner.

We shall also award 4 second, 8 third and 50 consolation prizes.



Question One. What was the first decree of the Soviet government? What did it proclaim and who was its author?

Question Two. When was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics created? Which were the first Soviet republics to join the Union? How many union republics, autonomous republics, autonomous regions and areas are there in the U.S.S.R.?

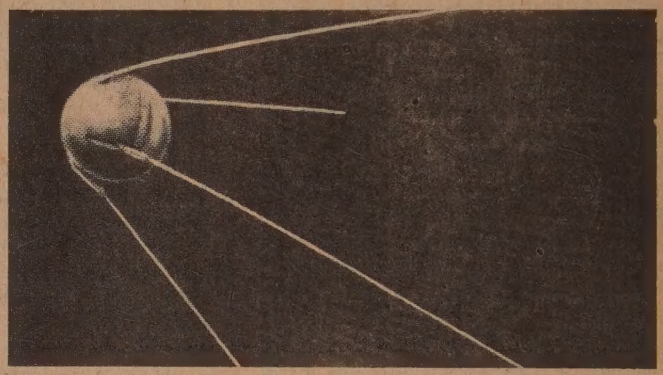
Question Three. What years were covered by the first five-year plan for the economic development of the U.S.S.R.? In how many years was it fulfilled?

Question Four. What episode from the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) is shown in this photograph? How many Soviet citizens died in the war?

Question Five. In what year was the first artificial earth satellite put into orbit? In what year did the first man go into space? What do you know about him? How many Soviet cosmonauts have been in space?

Question Six. What are the stages provided for in the programme for nuclear disarmament by the year 2000 put forward by Mikhail Gorbachev on January 15, 1986?

Question Seven. What other Soviet peace initiatives of recent years do you know of?



Coupon _____

Name _____

Address _____

Occupation _____

Please write your name and address legibly. Attach coupons to your answers.

Send your answers to New Times Editorial Office, Pushkin Square, Moscow, GSP, 103782, U.S.S.R. Don't forget to write "QUIZ" on the envelope.

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Vladimir Spivakov and his virtuosos

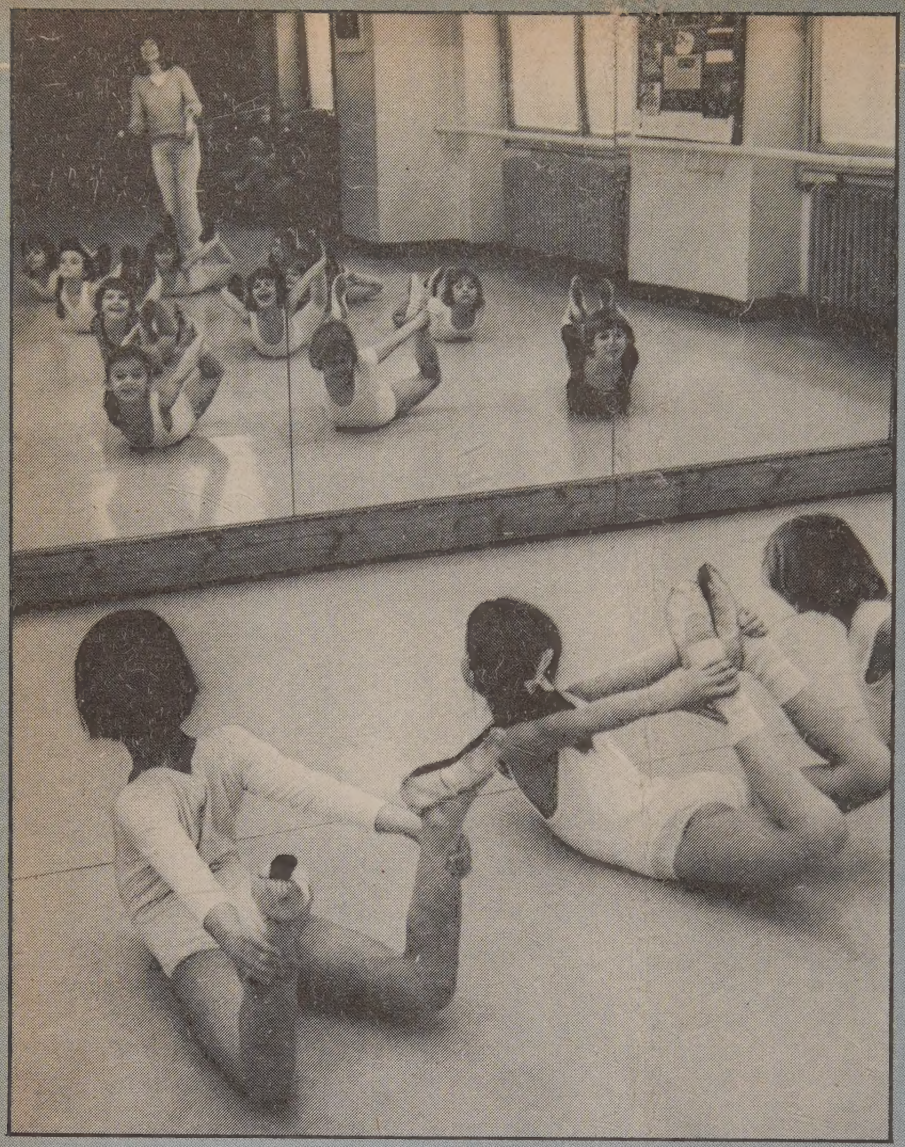
The bow tenderly touches the strings, the conductor's baton describes a sweeping semicircle and stops poised in mid-air. The musicians, their nerves taut, and their supple fingers in position, are all set to work the miracle of music.

The Virtuosos of Moscow chamber orchestra, Vladimir Spivakov's dream come true, will have been playing together for five years this September. The orchestra gives about 100 concerts a year, for which tickets always sell out in no time. "Every time we play a new piece we discover something new about the composer—and about ourselves," Vladimir Spivakov says.

At a concert.

Vladimir Spivakov.

In the world of music.



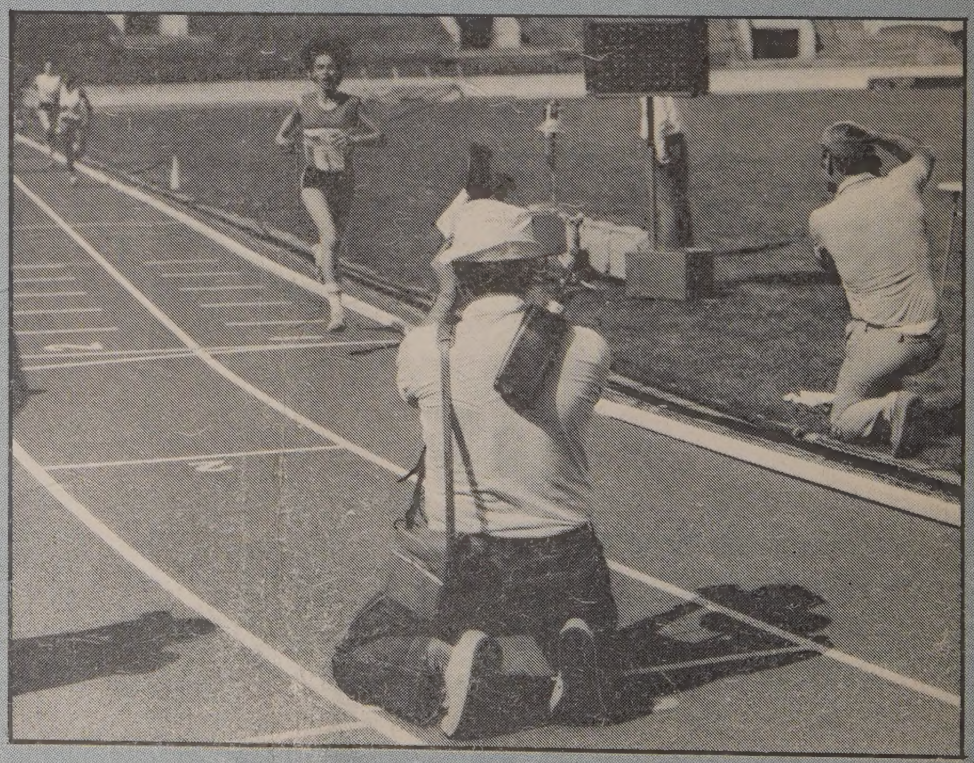
Future ballerinas.

International Contest

MAN AND MANKIND

Vlastimil Ipser (Czechoslovakia)

Finish.



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